

Conflict, Cooperation, and the Creation of the Postcolonial African Regional Order, 1957-1963



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Personal Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the History Degree Committee.

Jean-Robert Lalancette

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Summary

This thesis is a work of International History and an investigation of the birth of inter-African relations from Ghana's Independence in March 1957 to the establishment in May 1963 of Africa's first and wholly owned political organisation, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa. The OAU's foundation charter was and still stands as the first and longest-lasting unanimously approved agreement by African states in post-colonial African history. Its real historical importance, this thesis contends, is its contribution to the formal adoption of the lasting nation-state system in Africa as all signatories gave their unanimous support to the sanctity of their states' right to sovereignty. This thesis therefore uncovers the grand strategies and ensuing diplomacy of three African states – Ghana, Egypt, and Senegal – during their decolonization period and charts the changing course of these states' policies as diplomatic rifts emerged over how to reach the goal of unity. This period of African history thus saw mass propaganda campaigns, massive political interference in the affairs of other states, and several attempts by leaders to undermine other African regimes to the point of assassination, which situates this period as an African continent and its OAU as not looking outward, but inward. The long road to the foundation of the OAU was therefore the moment when a postcolonial African Regional Order was established where the rules of the game regulating inter-African relations were codified.

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Introduction

This thesis is a work of International History and an investigation of the birth of inter-African relations from Ghana's Independence in March 1957 to the establishment in May 1963 of Africa's first and wholly owned political organisation, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa. The OAU's foundation charter was and still stands as the first and longest-lasting unanimously approved agreement by African states in post-colonial African history. Its real historical importance, this thesis contends, is its contribution to the formal adoption of the lasting nation-state system in Africa as all signatories gave their unanimous support to the sanctity of their states' right to sovereignty. Furthermore, the signatories designed the charter with an important goal in mind. Despite giving the organisation the goal of forming a united front to navigate issues in world affairs, the main motivation of the charter's designers was to look inward, as well as to address and terminate problems with one another. Having witnessed six years of tumultuous inter-African relations, the charter's architects devised a set of rules regulating the proper conduct of African states with each other and the protection of the right of African states over the conduct of their own affairs.

The signing of the charter in May 1963 and the establishment of the state system was never a foregone conclusion. Six years prior, during the first few months of Ghana's independence, a mood of optimism and cooperation reigned over inter-African relations. As this thesis will demonstrate, every independent African state supported the idea of cooperating to achieve the same goal – the end of colonialism in Africa. Several worrying problems emerged in the following year, however, owing to the way African states conducted themselves in continental affairs in pursuit of this goal. As this thesis contends, a major reason underpinning the tumultuous relations between independent African states was a series of disagreements over how cooperation could be achieved and how they were to proceed to reach their common goal. In other words, although there was unanimity behind the goal of forging an African continent free of colonial domination, there was no consensus on what formed the means to this end.

African leaders therefore began to realise that their actions were sometimes not only working at counter-current to each other, but also that some states actively took the liberty to undermine others either to achieve the same objective, or to reach other overlapping goals. Cooperation towards the same end was therefore proving very tricky to achieve, and this is the theme that formed the backdrop of the erratic and often chaotic relations between African states from 1958 until 1963. This account of inter-African relations will also posit that the many rifts between African states and their reconciliation at Addis Ababa was not caused by a single crisis, but by collection of issues built up over these five years of state interaction towards the same desire to cooperate to bring an end of colonialism in Africa.

The mood of hopefulness that swept the continent in 1957-8 very quickly gave way to mutual suspicion, competition, and rivalry. An important factor lay behind this change in mood. The state-building processes underway in these states were at fault. Leaders of new African states aiming to give their new state a direction and build consensus in their domestic politics caused the rise of competing ideologies and beliefs in how the continent should take its political shape. These in no way negated the idea that states held the desire to terminate colonialism on the continent, but these ideologies and beliefs – often varying from state to state – overlapped this shared desire. It was precisely this reason why African states could often compete and rival one another despite wanting to reach the same end. This narrative therefore engages with an emerging and very popular idea in scholarship which posits that some African leaders at the time, notably Kwame Nkrumah, held beliefs that the aim of their anticolonial struggle was not only to free Africa from its colonial past, but also affect an international reordering of power relations to terminate colonialism the world over. Leaders like Nkrumah therefore believed that the first step to bring a more just system of international relations was to form a large vehicle like a formidable bloc of African states, commanded by a strong centralised power structure to break through the remaining chains on the continent.¹ Nkrumah's idea to affect change on a global scale through a very rigid power structure called the Union of African States (UAS) overlapped the shared desire to rid Africa of colonialism and brought friction in African relations since not all leaders agreed to the idea of the UAS. This thesis, however, breaks with this emerging field of inquiry for an important reason. Unlike scholars like Adom Getachew contend, leaders like

¹ Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 1-2, 110.

Nkrumah did not fail to meet their continental and international ambitions because their ideas were upended by others during an ideational battle, but because of how the leaderships of new African states acted in inter-African affairs.² While this thesis acknowledges that ideas were important, a very close inspection of these leader's deeds and not only their words is required as the theatre of inter-African relations was often where the buck dropped.

The connection between the leaderships of newly independent states and their polities was very important as they can explain why inter-African relations in this period were so unstable. With each emerging from a successful anti-colonial struggle where important domestic promises were made and had to be kept, they began to understand that with the loss of national unity acquired during the struggle for independence came the threat of domestic opposition.³ African leaders were therefore reluctant to let go of their anti-colonial discourse because of its enormous popularity and discovered that using it in a wider African context was an attractive tool to securitise their new regimes. Furthermore, all felt that if they were able to influence African politics and shape the continent they would build on their legitimacy at home. Conversely, if a leader fell out of favour and failed to make their mark on the African political scene they would run the risk of losing their popularity and justification to rule. They were thus stuck between a rock and a hard place; each new state leader had to find a winning combination on how to juggle their own ambitions and security, the growing needs and pressures at home, and achieving foreign policy goals. This thesis provides the explanation of why the newly made independent African states competed so fiercely against each other for continental dominance and how their leaders overcame their differences in 1963 and agreed to come together to build their first African institution to regulate continental affairs. The conduct of inter-African relations and the implementation of foreign policies in this period were influenced heavily by their country's domestic politics and state-building.⁴ Thus, this study examines the effect of the domestic challenges in the state how their leaders chose to craft foreign policies from which arose conflict or cooperation. The story of inter-African relations in the period of 1957 to 1963

² Adom Getachew's book is persuasive if you only take her account from a vacuum of ideas. Very little attention is paid to how these African leaders chose to establish and wage their foreign policies to make their ideas a reality.

³ Immanuel Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Independence* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), Chapter V.

⁴ Recent scholarly attention to the International Relations of the Global South are showing that it was very common in this period for the foreign policies of states to be influenced by their domestic politics. See, Imad Mansour, *Statecraft in the Middle East: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics and Security* (London: IB Tauris, 2016).

was therefore a story about the forces and processes of integration of African states into an acceptable system of rules regulating their conduct with one another.

With neither military nor economic power to use as tools to gain any influence in Africa, states instead used an incredibly effective public diplomacy to reach their foreign and domestic policy goals. This means that during the early post-independence period, inter-African relations effectively functioned as a multi-lateral dialogue in which each state had an input and the others felt a corresponding output. Since these were new states in the making with a population impatient for change, the effects of something seemingly anodyne like a leader taking a new position in African affairs had the capacity of turning on a major alarm bell in the other countries. Any new turn in this diplomatic dialogue held the threat of a terrible disproportional effect on other countries like the erosion of solidarity and legitimacy for the new regimes. In this great diplomatic dialogue specific themes and issues emerged in 1958-60 and became hotly contested because they had important effects for the new nations and their future as functioning independent states. While there were a host of contested issues that arose, they nevertheless narrow down to the following: what it meant to be an ‘African’, how should the independent African nations cooperate and respond to the continued colonial presence, how the African states should band together to confront their own continental affairs and engage with the world, and finally, defining what was meant by ‘African unity’ as an important ideal.

Not only did their interactions determine what political scientists term the ‘regional order’ in Africa – the rules of the game of continental diplomacy – by which they would conduct their foreign affairs on the continent in the future, but they also helped cement Africa’s place in the world and its interactions with it.⁵ Rules were agreed to at Addis Ababa; for instance the agreement that state sovereignty was sacrosanct, helped ward off the slew of attempts by African leaders of interfering in the affairs of other states to improve their relative continental position, or worse, to topple one another. This was a period in which several contentious ideological issues were also finally settled and removed as potential sources of conflict. The diplomacy in this period is particularly important to track because of the changes in these definitions and what they

⁵ Christopher Clapham makes a similar point that the foundation of the OAU helped channel inter-African relations. It must be said, however, that his book does not include the Arab states of Africa, which are extremely important. See, Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 110.

can tell us about the way in which the African leaders of new states thought of themselves, their goals, and how they thought they could have an impact on the continent, and in some cases, the world.

The states most covered in depth in this story – Ghana, Egypt, and Senegal – make up the protagonists of this narrative as they were the most involved in African affairs; the narrative of inter-African relations in the 1957-63 period also revolves around them because they were the most influential in changing the course of inter-African politics. They were most influential because their domestic politics necessitated a very strong stand in inter-African politics in order to cement their power at home. They were also the most influential in laying the ground for important ideas that were debated throughout this period and they did so in numerous ways. In the cases of Egypt and Ghana, who rushed onto the African political scene to engage the continent into rival anti-colonial directions, Gamal Abdel Nasser and Kwame Nkrumah used a mixture of propaganda campaigns and the hosting of conferences to allow their message to spread throughout the continent. Conferences were indeed very important events for inter-African affairs as their resolutions would dictate states' positions on common African issues like colonialism, economic cooperation, alliances, and the like. Conferences, notably in Monrovia in 1960 and Casablanca in 1961, were just as heated as the pan-African conferences of the 1940s but also so polarising that they determined systems of alliances. They also permitted states to congregate and debate issues which were settled. One such important issue – Senegal being its largest backer – was that the agreement that sovereignty was sacrosanct helped ward off the slew of attempts (common in the late 1950s and early 1960s) of some African leaders of interfering in the affairs of another state for their own benefit, or worse, to topple one another. Thus, the period of 1957-63 was a period in which several contentious ideological issues were also finally settled, removing them as potential sources of conflict. Some points of ideological contention that were settled in the summit in Addis Ababa in May 1963 were the one true meaning of 'African unity' and what was meant by 'African'.

Ghana and Egypt feature prominently in the story as both ruthlessly pursued cavalier foreign policies and tried a mixture of enticement and bullying as means for their own ends.⁶

⁶ Nasser's paternalism is made quite bare in his own text. He likens Sub-Saharan Africa as a 'dark land' in need of Egypt's guiding light. In his foreign policy in Africa, he was also using a method of 'carrot and stick' to goad other states to do his bidding like using promises of loans to foreign leaders, or support for their domestic opponents. See,

Both stood to win a great deal from the rising tide of African challenges to colonial rule, and this motivated them to design and pursue very aggressive foreign policies in Africa. Both had large ambitions for the political future of the continent (they wanted to see it conform to their own image and wanted to aggrandise their state's power) and their large role in it, and both had a reason to achieve this role for domestic purposes. Nkrumah and Nasser were authoritarian leaders of new states and maintaining popularity was crucial for their legitimacy underpinning their leadership and their survival. These leaders made grandiose promises to their populations about becoming a guiding light for Africa and a successful eradication of colonialism on the continent (Nasser) and becoming the force to send the colonial powers packing and forge African unity (Nkrumah). The stakes were high: they had to deliver or risk undermining their own rule.⁷ By 1960, the situation in Africa heated up diplomatically because of the sudden dramatic increase in the number of independent states on the continent, most of them from the former French West Africa. Diplomatic activity picked up at a really fast pace, and alliances formed on the continent as a result of mutual suspicion of each other's motives, and of either agreement with or resistance to the policies of France, Ghana, or Egypt.

Scholarly Overview of African History in the Leadup to the Formation of the OAU

There are several recent accounts of the diplomacy of African states which are very detailed and good, but their scope remains compartmentalized into regions – North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East. Strangely, much of the scholarship alludes to the fact that there were political tensions between states in the lead up to the foundation of the OAU, yet keep their accounts superficial, brief, and with a lack of in-depth analysis.⁸ As for Egypt's foreign policy in Africa, it has never been seriously considered since the opening of several state

Gamal Abdel Nasser, *The Philosophy of the Revolution* (Cairo: Mondiale Press, 1955), Fathi al-Dib, *Abdel Nasser et la révolution algérienne* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985), and Jean-Robert Lalancette, "The Third Scramble for Africa: Egypt's Continental Policy in The Early Years of the Decolonization Period." (2015) MPhil, University of Oxford. There is no better work which illustrates Nkrumah's own 'carrot and stick' approach to African diplomacy and his paternalistic attitude towards other state ideologies in Africa than Scott Thompson's excellent work based on Ghanaian foreign ministry documents which were briefly available after Nkrumah was toppled in a coup in 1966. See, Scott W. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966: Diplomacy, Ideology, and the New State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

⁷ It is quite remarkable just how much political leadership in Africa and the Third World in general resembled the politics described by Machiavelli. See, Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey Mansfield (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), especially chapter XIX.

⁸ Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, and Robert Vitalis, "The Midnight Ride of Kwame Nkrumah and Other Fables of Bandung (Ban-doong)," *Humanity*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2013): 261-288.

archives. The only serious account was written in the 1970s and based on newspaper articles and speeches from Egyptian politicians. The author also seems to view Egypt's relations with Africa through the lens of the Arab-Israeli Conflict as it infers that Egypt had an African policy mainly to counter Israel's own African policy.⁹ Gaining access to Egyptian archives remains a problem, thus the inclusion of Egypt's African policy in this narrative necessitated using a mixed use of primary sources from diplomatic archives (France and Belgium) as well as material found in Ghana, Tunisia, and Senegal.

The best and most instructive monograph available on inter-African diplomacy in this period is Scott Thompson's *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966: Diplomacy, Ideology, and the New State* because the author had rare access to the archives of the Ghanaian Foreign Ministry right after a coup toppled Kwame Nkrumah in 1966. While it does give an interesting account of Nkrumah's ideological underpinnings for his foreign policy and Ghana's relationship with Egypt, it does not go into much depth with Ghana's troubled relationship with its Francophone West African neighbours or their political development.¹⁰ There are several recent accounts of the diplomacy of African states which are very detailed and good, but their scope remains compartmentalized into regions – North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East. Christopher Clapham's excellent book on the International Relations of Africa, for example, only considers the interaction of states south of the Sahara.¹¹ Michael Willis' excellent and much-needed book on the Maghreb does give a fantastic account and convincing explanations behind the particularities of the foreign policies of Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.¹² Yet it does not engage with the very prominent African identity of these states and their history of interaction with the continent as a whole. These were obviously important: the FLN attended every African conference from 1957 to 1963, as did Tunisia and Morocco.

⁹ Tareq Ismael, *The U.A.R. in Africa: Egypt's Policy under Nasser* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1971).

University Press, 1971). There is another book which does help determine some interesting motivations (some examples of paternalism evident in the articles) behind Egypt's African policy, but it does not attempt to sketch out a narrative. Khair el-Din Haseeb ed., *The Arabs and Africa* (London: Croom Helm, 1985).

¹⁰ Scott W. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966: Diplomacy, Ideology, and the New State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

¹¹ Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹² Michael Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring* (London: Hurst & Company, 2012).

The Connections between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa in Scholarship

One of the aspects of this study is to add the growing body of work uncovering the scale and importance of connections and relationships between North and West Africa despite them being seen as two distinct regions. Certainly, the most curious aspect of African studies in general is how compartmentalised it is. Africa, after all, is an incredibly large continent, and splitting the continent into regional zones to conduct studies does carry some measure of sense. It is not uncommon, for instance, to see continental regions mentioned in studies like East Africa, West Africa, and North Africa. This is perfectly understandable for those willing to study a regional group of African states but when Africa has been considered *as one whole* in studies it has largely been split into two units of study: North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa.¹³ Part of the answer why the split occurred has to do with the establishment of Area Studies as a discipline in the 20th Century which compartmentalised ‘different’ parts of the world for study. Edward Alpers, Allen Roberts, and Paul Tiyambe Zeleza remark in their overviews and critiques of African Studies that the idea of Area Studies grew as part of an American project to compartmentalize areas of the world unknown to policymakers into regions which could start to be studied systematically.¹⁴ Thus, anthropologists and political geographers were put to work to divide up the world into neat, coherent parts based on supposed commonalities of language, ethnicity, politics, religion, and shared historical heritage. The result was a clear split onto the Sahara, with the continent of Africa split in two: the upper Arab third going to Middle East Studies, and Sub-Saharan Africa to the Africanists. This has become problematic for the following reasons: it has become difficult for researchers in either camp to conceive of a project spanning the divide since they have internalized the notion of the existence of many different ‘Africas’.

We can also point to another level of complexity. There are problems within the divisions themselves; for instance, in Middle East Studies, the Maghreb is thought of as being distinct from the Middle East (hence the name MENA, or Middle East *and* North Africa) and research on

¹³ Jeffrey Herbst’s great account of African state-building, for example, focuses on Sub-Saharan Africa and leaves out North Africa. See, Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).

¹⁴ P.T. Zeleza, ‘African Studies and Universities since Independence’, *Transition*, Vol. 101 (2009): 110-135, and Alpers, E. and A.F. Roberts, “What is African Studies? Some reflections”, *African Issues*, Vol. 30, No. 2, (2002).

topics including both regions of the Arab World are sparse. Some do exist, like Eugene Rogan's famous history of the Arabs, but they remain very few.¹⁵ Particularly on diplomacy, these books are extremely scarce because despite the very heavy interaction between the two regions after independence. Michael Willis' *Politics and Power in the Maghreb: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring* is a case in point; whilst it is a remarkable and much needed history of these three countries, its focus stresses on the Maghreb, and by doing so, helps project the image of the distinctiveness of the Maghreb from the Middle East and the rest of Africa. States of different regions interact with one another and do not necessarily pay any mind to artificial divisions. Colonial actors and even the African leaders included in this dissertation show often in sources that they had internalised the idea of the split. For instance, Moktar Ould Daddah spoke of his state, Mauritania, as being a bridge between a 'Black Africa' and a 'White Africa'.¹⁶ In the African Middle Ages, the Arabs during the Islamic conquest of North Africa began to view the areas of the south through an ethnic lens - calling the people living in the *Sahel* (or the southern shore of the Sahara Desert) as part of *Bilad al-Sudan* – or 'land of the Blacks'.¹⁷

The last decade, however, has spawned a new generation of historians to question if there ever had been a true disconnect between North and Sub-Saharan Africa. Taking on the misleading idea that the Sahara became a barrier to interaction during colonialism's realignment of trade and politics to the European metropolises, many works have emerged showing that this was never the case. During the colonial period, Saharan connections were very much alive and saw important trade, travel, migration, and even economic activity continue between the shores of the Sahel.¹⁸ This dissertation adds something new to this body of scholarship by bringing the timeline of the story of the interactions between North and South Africa ahead from the colonial age to the period of African statehood. Whilst trade, migration, and travel did continue, the connection between North and Sub-Saharan Africa took on a new dimension as new state

¹⁵ Eugene Rogan, *The Arabs: A History* (London: Penguin Books, 2009).

¹⁶ "Communauté. 24 JUL. 1960. Mauritanie. UP 19." VP 141, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

¹⁷ François-Xavier Fauvelle, *The Golden Rhinoceros: Histories of the African Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 48.

¹⁸ James McDougall and Judith Scheele, "Introduction," in *Saharan Frontiers: Space and Mobility in Northwest Africa*, Ed. James McDougall and Judith Scheele (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), and Ghislaine Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails: Islamic Law, Trade Networks, and Cross-Cultural Exchange in Nineteenth-Century Western Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

leaderships emerged from colonialism, began the process of building their new states, and undertook foreign relations with states beyond the Sahel. This theme forms the backdrop of inter-African relations in 1957-8 as new states met for the first time at official conferences in a symbolic show of their triumph over the former colonial overlords. This dissertation shows that the enthusiastic mood characterising their initial contacts in Accra in March 1957 quickly subsided to uncertainty, friction, and differences of opinion over the necessary challenge of forging a system of cooperation to bring the rest of Africa out of colonialism. From April 1958 onwards, these initial contacts yielded the important debates and questions that would frame inter-African relations until their resolution at the OAU summit in May 1963. Questions over what constituted a true African identity, whom was fit or unfit to lead the continent to full decolonisation (and if it was right for one to do so), what form should cooperation take place, what were the true issues regarding the African continent, what were the agreed limits of the continent and its affairs, were African states' new borders legitimate or illegitimate and if so, if it was right for foreign leaders to redress them. These were proof that the new leaderships held their own clashing opinions and visions over the future political shape of the continent. Their subsequent decisions on appropriate courses of action were to signal the start of diplomatic tensions which characterised inter-African relations until 1963.

De-linking Cold War History from Africa's History

Recently, historians of Africa in the Middle Ages have worked tirelessly to bring their narratives into the wider focus of World History to prove that the continent – and not just North Africa – has been important to shaping the history of our world.¹⁹ These historians are lending help to a previous generation of Africanists like Cheik Anta Diop and Martin Bernal in the project of 'Afrocentricity'. Coined by the late Ali Mazrui, this historical project aims to place Africa at the centre of the history of the world and to finally provide the counterpoint to Orientalist constructions of African History.²⁰ Naturally, central to the project has been a conscious effort to properly evaluate the African contribution to other parts and peoples of the world. To achieve it, scholars have had to put "the African experience" first which required

¹⁹ François-Xavier Fauvelle, *The Golden Rhinoceros: Histories of the African Middle Ages*, 14 and Michael Gomez, *African Dominion: A New History of Empire in Early and Medieval West Africa*, 4.

²⁰ Ali Mazrui, "The Re-Invention of Africa: Edward Said, V. Y. Mudimbe, and Beyond," *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (2005): 77-9, 81.

placing African sources to the forefront.²¹ This movement in the study of Africa is tremendously important not only because it dismisses the assumption of Africans' lack of a voice (if not irrelevance in the face of global processes) and also seeks to assess the level and effects of interaction between Africa and the rest of the world.

This dissertation both pays homage to the project and yet in the attempt to be as accurate as possible, falls short on another aspect. The main purpose of this dissertation is to provide the perspective of the African states during the critical phase of their continent's decolonisation. To bring the 'African experience' to the centre, great care was given to uncover and use a maximum amount of African diplomatic sources as opposed to relying on western sources. While I believe the maximum reliance on African sources was critical to correctly narrate the story of the coming together of the continent as one political unit as a genuine African story, this dissertation will not attempt to join the current of World History. The period of the new African states' foreign relations under study has led me to urge caution to connect Africa with other global processes like the Cold War or the Afro-Asian movement. 1956-63 were critical years of the rebuilding stage of African politics after the start of decolonisation, and they were years when the new African states were more focused inward to continental affairs than to the wider world. Apart from Egypt, not much attention was paid by other African leaders to the 1955 Bandung Conference and its aftermath.²² Even the Cold War, whilst a major process on the world stage at this time, was not considered to be terribly important to African leaders when compared to their domestic and continental affairs. Since this work of international history places the experience of the African states at the forefront, it is therefore necessary to disentangle it from the current of another dominant field with a wider scope – Cold War History.

For much of the previous two decades, the field of International History has been confounded under the seemingly all-consuming sub-field of 'Cold War History'. Initially a project to understand and explain events after WWII using newly declassified archives from the United States (and its NATO allies) on one side and the former Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries on the other, it slowly branched with scholars going to archives also going outside of

²¹ Ibid, 77.

²² Christopher Clapham makes a similar point in his book. See, Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, 126. This point is also addressed in chapter two as the leaders of independent African states met for the first time in April 1958 in Accra, there was resistance to Egypt's idea that the conference they were attending was an extension of the Bandung Conference.

the Cold War's European theatre to place other characters at the centre of narratives located in the 'Third World' in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.²³ Perhaps this turn in Cold War History owes most to a pivotal book by Matthew Connelly about one of the most important events of Africa's decolonisation, the Algerian War. In his *A Diplomatic Revolution*, Connelly explains that he sought to break the pattern of reliance on archival sources from the Cold War rivals (he used archives from Algeria and Tunisia) to build a better narrative by adding the perspective of the Algerian resistance movement to the French and American.²⁴ Of specific concern to this generation of Cold War historians was to demonstrate the repercussions of the emerging states' interaction with the main participants of the Cold War. Despite the inclusion of Third World states, the histories of their diplomacy were constructed in tandem with one, or sometimes, both the rival superpowers which makes the Cold War omnipresent and very influential in events in the Global South. Recent narratives have attempted to decouple their stories' main characters from the superpowers, but somehow come back to the Cold War and its influence. In *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order*, Jeffrey James Byrne narrates from the perspective of Ben Bella's Algeria after independence, bringing much of the focus of the book on Algeria's relations with other actors in the Global South. Yet whilst Byrne does succeed in delivering a postcolonial International History, he nonetheless demonstrates that Algeria's push into the globalising world led it to become consumed by the Cold War despite their policies of non-alignment.²⁵

International historians, during these past few years, have therefore become increasingly interested shifting the focus away from the Cold War to highlight the important state interactions within the Global South. While the Cold War rivalry was important to the course of international events, the foreign relations of newly decolonised states were especially crucial to

²³ Perhaps the greatest example of what was called 'New Cold War History', see John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997). For great examples of Cold War History books using archives in the Global South, see Lorenz Luthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), Paul Thomas Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), and Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

²⁴ Connelly notes in his introduction that he was the first to consider breaking the mould of Cold War History's reliance on American, European, or Soviet sources. See, Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2002), vii.

²⁵ Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 54-5. It has to be noted that unlike Connelly, Byrne focused on and used more Algerian sources.

the shaping of politics within the Global South. It is somewhat curious, however, that the recent historiography is slowly picking up on this approach as it was indeed quite popular with many Western scholars of ‘Area Studies’ in the 1960s. Works like Malcom Kerr’s essay on inter-Arab politics, G.H. Jansen’s book on the interactions in the Afro-Asian world, and Immanuel Wallerstein’s study of inter-African politics (to name but a few) were arguing that the politics of the Global South were significant to the actors involved.²⁶ What is incredible is that these scholars were not as removed as we are today from the Cold War (after all they lived and worked during it) and yet managed to keep away from the Cold War lens as much as possible to dare suggest that it was perhaps not the dominant factor in the political life of states in the Global South. So where does that leave the Cold War in an analysis of African politics in the 1950s and 1960s?

No matter the approach adopted by International Historians of the Global South in the 1950s and 1960s, the Cold War remains an ‘elephant in the room’ because it was spreading throughout the globe. While there were foundational moments of interaction within the Global South in this period,²⁷ they produced the concept of ‘Non-Alignment’ and ‘Afro-Asia’, which was the reaction to *both* the retreating force of colonialism and the globalisation of the superpower conflict.²⁸ In the middle of the decolonisation of empires of the 1950-60s, the Cold War spread throughout Asia through direct superpower involvement (Korea and South Vietnam) and the Middle East, notably in 1955-7 as a result of Egypt’s deal with the Soviet Bloc for new weaponry, the Suez Crisis, and finally the landing of American Marines in Lebanon to counter alleged Soviet and Egyptian influence.²⁹ It would be a mistake, however, to believe that in the case of Africa the retreat of the colonial powers left a gaping chasm into which the Superpowers rushed, pulling the continent into the Cold War. While it was true in the case of Indochina (and then South Vietnam) where the French left only to be replaced incrementally by the Americans³⁰

²⁶ Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War, 1958–1964: A Study of Ideology in Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), G.H. Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Independence* (New York: Random House, 1961).

²⁷ Christopher Lee, ed. *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010).

²⁸ G.H. Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment*, prologue.

²⁹ For a great International History on the latter, see Salim Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

³⁰ For a good recent example making this claim see, Max Hastings, *Vietnam: An Epic Tragedy, 1945-1975* (London: William Collins, 2018).

and perhaps in a more muddled way with Soviet and American influence in the Middle East, in Africa it was different for a host of reasons which left the Cold War's influence to a minimum from 1957-63.

A key example illustrating the lack of superpower attention to Africa took place in correspondence between France and the United States in 1958. When de Gaulle regained power, he immediately set out to challenge the growing power of the United States to reinstate France as a great power. De Gaulle sent the Americans and the British a note asking to join them in direct involvement in the Lebanese Crisis at the behest of the Lebanese Government but to his astonishment, his request was ignored as they went ahead without France to land troops.³¹ This affront caused de Gaulle to cry foul over the NATO framework's favouritism to the Anglo-Saxon powers' range of action, and he requested talks with them to prevent further affronts to France's status and rights to act in world affairs, especially when it came to Africa.³² As a result, the three powers sat down in Washington in April 1959 and hammered out the specifics of their key interests in Africa. The Americans acknowledged that Africa was strategically important for the West because of its resources and geopolitical position. They also believed that the continent was going to be affected by the pressures of self-determination and that "it was essential that [change] should take place in an orderly manner and in the closest cooperation with the Western powers." Most importantly, American officials explicitly stated that "the U.S. regards the European Powers as best equipped for the leading role" and that it supported any attempts at evolutionary self-determination.³³ The United States, in short, acknowledged to the French that Africa was not their turf, thus recognising the French sphere of influence in Africa.

One may point to a possible objection – the case of Egypt in the 1950s-60s– and say that the Cold War's involvement was quite heavy, but when it came to the superpowers and Egypt it

³¹ "M. Couve de Murville, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à M. Roché, Ambassadeur de France à Beyrouth, 15 juillet 1958," and "M. Couve de Murville, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, aux Représentants Diplomatiques de France à Londres, Washington, 17 juillet 1958," telegram reprinted in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français: 1958, Tome II (1er juillet – 31 décembre)* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1993), 76-7, 89-91.

³² Charles de Gaulle, "Lettre et Mémorandum au Général Eisenhower, Président des États-Unis d'Amérique, 17 septembre 1958," memorandum reprinted in Charles de Gaulle *Lettres, Notes et Carnets: juin 1958 – décembre 1960* (Paris: Plon, 1985), 82-84.

³³ "Memorandum of Conversation, April 16, 1959," Memorandum reprinted in Glenn La Fantasia, Harriet Dashiell Schwar and Stanley Shaloff, ed, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960: Volume XIV, Africa* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992), 45-7.

was always the case that it regarded Egypt and its relationship to other states across the Suez Canal and not because of its affairs in Africa.³⁴ The Soviet Union did start to have political and economic relations with African states frustrated with the West, starting in North Africa with Egypt in 1955 and in Sub-Saharan Africa with Guinea in 1959. At the time, it was Nikita Khrushchev's hope that African states could be convinced of the Soviet Union's ideology and side with the Eastern Bloc.³⁵ Economic relationships were founded between the Soviet Union and African states and some small forms of aid was given, but the Soviets often found their attempts at setting up spheres of influence in Africa to be completely thwarted by the strong leaderships of these states (Guinea's Sékou Touré and Gamal Abdel Nasser are prime examples).³⁶ In any case, the Soviet Union's economic aid given in forms of material was judged completely inadequate by the Guineans which undoubtedly gave it a bad reputation in this period.³⁷ As a result, Soviet influence was kept out of Africa in this period. There was a case, however, where the Cold War did play a role on the continent - the Congo Crisis which started in 1960. During the crisis, the Americans ramped up their diplomacy significantly in Africa to push away the Soviet diplomatic attempts to gain a toehold there and to undermine the rule of Patrice Lumumba, whom the Americans believed to be turning into a communist and new Fidel Castro. Yet American involvement did not surpass all other states involved because its efforts deliberately remained subordinated to the United Nations' lead.³⁸ The Congo Crisis, however, was the signal of the start of the trickling in of involvement (which really took off more significantly from the mid-1960s onward) on the continent by the superpowers, as colonial conflicts emerged in the Portuguese and Belgian colonies during decolonisation.

Superpower interest and involvement on the continent from 1956 to 1963 was further made negligible given the attitudes of the leaders of the new independent African states. One of

³⁴ It was true that the Soviet Union helped Egypt stage an Afro-Asian conference in Cairo in late 1957 in hopes it could get a toehold in Africa, but Egypt nixed these plans to prevent the Soviets from supplanting them in influence there. This story is given in detail in chapter two.

³⁵ Sergey Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956-1964* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010), 13-4, 76-7, 92.

³⁶ Ibid, 28, 129-37, 181-6, 187-8.

³⁷ Mazov writes of a multitude of examples of the lack of foresight by the Soviets to deliver adequate aid which was often left to waste in ports because of insufficient distribution networks, spare parts, or advisors to help use equipment. See, *ibid*, 184-6.

³⁸ Emmanuel Gerard and Bruce Kuklick, *Death in the Congo: Murdering Patrice Lumumba* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), chapter 4, and Sergey Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: The USSR in West Africa and the Congo*, 76-7, 92.

the revelations of using archives from North and West Africa – as opposed to archival material from the superpowers – was that the governments of the new African states did not pay much attention to the Cold War in this period. Leaders like Senghor, Nasser, Nkrumah, Bourguiba were all acutely aware of the superpower conflict and did address it from time to time in international forums, particularly at the United Nations, where they urged the Superpowers to disarm.³⁹ Regarding African affairs, however, it is very clear that from 1956 to the establishment of the OAU in May 1963 they were focused instead on setting rules to govern inter-African relations (especially the restraint of intervention in each other's affairs), the prospect of inter-African cooperation in trade and international relations, the prospect of speeding up the process of continental decolonisation, and finally, establishing a common agreement on the future relationship between the continent and their former European colonisers. This dissertation, therefore, is justified to steer clear of being described as a story of the Cold War because it simply had not yet arrived in a meaningful way in Africa to alter the continent's politics. Simply put, the decolonisation of Africa and its subsequent inter-state interactions until 1963 is not a Cold War story, but an African and European story.

Notable Omissions from the Story

There are notable omissions from this narrative because it was forced to narrow down the scope inter-African relations. As a result, some less important North African and Sub-Saharan states were relegated to the periphery or omitted entirely. States like Sierra Leone, Nigeria (which only began to throw its weight in African affairs in 1961-2 and lagged in influence behind Ghana), Niger, Upper Volta, Dahomey, and Libya do not feature prominently. States outside of West and North Africa are rarely mentioned for a few reasons: for one, many states only became independent much later in the story like Kenya and Tanganyika, when basic ideas of African unity and the desirability of one system of rules for regional relations or another were already well established in the continental discourse. Others, like Cameroon, Central African Republic, and Madagascar did not share contiguous borders with the protagonists and were

³⁹ A good instance is the May 1961 appeal of the Monrovia Group (a mixture of anglophone and Francophone African states, along with some Arab countries) to the superpowers that they should stop building nuclear weapons and begin disarming. According to the conference's resolutions, this item came at the end of the agenda and therefore showing that continental politics was more important to them. See, "CHAS/26. Monrovia, Libéria, 12 mai 1961." Folder Unité Africaine Généralités (1960 à 1965), National Archives of Senegal.

therefore insulated from the harmful effects of relations with predatory neighbours like Morocco and Ghana.

Issues in places like South Africa and the Portuguese colonies are also absent. This thesis does not negate the fact that West and Arab-African states did not consider problems in places like South Africa to be inconsequential. At the 1958 Conference of Independent African States, for example, African delegations addressed the racial problem in South Africa and the steps they ought to take together in protest.⁴⁰ Yet problems in East and South Africa (with the exception of the Congo Crisis) at the time were issues that were not as polarising as the Mauritanian Question, or whether or not African states should rally together behind an anti-colonial policy against France. The largest issue which is not covered in minute detail in this narrative of postcolonial politics is the Congo Crisis.

No rational scholar of African history could ever persuasively claim that the Congo Crisis did not matter and should be left out of a narrative because of it. Not only did it provide the first stand-off between the two rival superpowers on African ground, but it also resulted in the Western-assisted murder of a democratically elected African leader, Patrice Lumumba.⁴¹ The crisis also spurred the important African leaders of Ghana, Egypt, and Ethiopia to send military personnel to join a United Nations force to ensure it could restore peace, prevent the Katanga secession, and keep Lumumba in power. This evidence alone could potentially be wielded in support of its inclusion in a narrative of African affairs in the period under study and to include this Cold War connection. Such an argument, however, would fail to be persuasive in the face of two important factors. Firstly, it is indeed important to highlight that the Congo Crisis was the first Cold War flash point on African soil. Yet its length, scale, and outcome for the loser, the Soviet Union, shows that it was an isolated event for the duration of the period under study. According to new research from Soviet archives, the Congo Crisis was nothing but a short flash point in which the Soviet Union was forced to retreat until 1966. Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet leader, had held an important interest in trying to expand Soviet influence into Africa using foreign aid since 1955-6, and he saw Lumumba as a radical he could work with to counter

⁴⁰ "Conference of Independent African States – 1958," 380-8. I. Micr. Afr. 573, Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.

⁴¹ Ludo De Witte's research uncovered a very scathing account of Western interference in the Congo's affairs and the West's assistance on ending not only his presidency, but his life. See, Ludo De Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba* (London: Verso, 2002).

American influence.⁴² The Soviet leader also threatened the United States to intervene with a large force to check their influence and support Lumumba. Alessandro Iandolo, however, points out that the threat was a complete bluff to try to compel the United States to stop their support of Katanga and Lumumba's domestic opposition. Not only did the Soviet Air Force did not have the airlifting capabilities to transport a large force, but neither did the Soviet Navy have the means and the Americans knew it.⁴³ The best the Soviets could do was assist with its few transports to ferry a much smaller Ghanaian force from Accra to Leopoldville.⁴⁴ The Americans called the bluff soon after and led the UN efforts to shut down runways to stop the Soviet planes and shut down radio stations to silence Lumumba and prevent him from rallying his domestic power base. This left the Soviet Union with no choice but to resort to the dismal chance of trying to influence the outcome of the crisis at the United Nations.⁴⁵ As a result of its 'loss of Congo', the Soviet Union lost its confidence to confront the United States on African soil, and its strategy of buying influence in Africa saw a significant dwindling of aid packages to African states.⁴⁶ The Soviet Union, in other words, lost its appetite to spread its influence in Africa and would not return after the OAU summit of 1963.

The second factor behind the decision not to delve deeper in the Congo Crisis in this narrative is the problematic context of inter-African relations during the crisis. It would be tempting to think of the Congo Crisis as either an important rallying point or lesson to the independent African states who later formed the OAU. Making this argument is beset by too many problems, particularly when the Congo Crisis is scrutinised in the context of inter-African relations. As chapter five will show, when the call from Morocco came in December 1960 for all African states to meet in Casablanca to discuss measures to respond to the crisis, only a few responded and went. As I will demonstrate, not only did these states (Morocco, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Egypt, the Algerian government in exile, and Libya before it opted out at the conference's end) each did so with different and more pressing ulterior motives unrelated to the crisis, but the ones who did not attend had instead chosen to shun the attendees because of they had suffered to

⁴² Alessandro Iandolo, "Imbalance of Power: The Soviet Union and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1961," in *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Spring 2014): 32-6, 54.

⁴³ Ibid, 41-3, 45.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 49-50.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 45, 49-52.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 54-5.

their predatory actions in continental politics. The resulting split into two competing alliances in African affairs between the Casablanca and Monrovia blocs in 1961 therefore did not occur because of the Congo Crisis, but because of antagonisms in inter-African relations as these were held to be much more important.

The Structure of the Thesis

Chapters one and two make up the first phase of inter-African relations and it took the form of an African Scramble for Africa as both Gamal Abdel Nasser and Kwame Nkrumah saw Africa as a virgin land ripe for their influence to steer it on their own style of anti-colonialism. The first chapter demonstrates the domestic origins of their foreign policies and how this shapes their goals. A rivalry initially grew between them as Ghana attempted to keep Egypt well out of African affairs because it suspected Nasser only wanted to use Africa's decolonisation as a platform to spread his anti-colonial message which was often loaded with issues that had nothing to do with the African continent. Central to this chapter are the debates that came at the Conference of Independent African States (IAS) which was the very first time that official delegations from independent African states met in the same place in April 1958. Chapter three explores the way in which the rivalry between Nasser and Nkrumah was eventually stymied when both realised they pursued similar goals, notably their anti-colonial efforts. They joined their efforts in propaganda campaigns, Egypt with its powerful radio network, and Nkrumah with print media. Their anti-colonial policies also became clearer and they began to define issues like the sanctity of borders as a consequence of their actions, especially Ghana which undertook severe challenges (which were justified by dubious means) to rip away territory from its two neighbours, Togo and Ivory Coast. The fourth chapter delves into the domestic conditions that formed Senegal's foreign policy orientation in the wake of the Mali Federation split of August 1960, and details how its isolation in West Africa led it to seek alliances abroad. Furthermore, French Soudan's intrusions into Senegalese affairs caused the Senegalese leader, Léopold Senghor, to start forming a bulwark against predatory states. Chapter V details the Mauritanian Question of 1960-1 in which it saw parry Morocco's attempt to absorb its southern neighbour into the Kingdom. This was an important development which led to the creation of one of the powerful rival blocs in African politics, the Casablanca Group. The powers which combined in the Casablanca Group, Ghana, Egypt, Guinea, Mali all gravitated around each other because they

had anti-colonial policies, shared the same tactics to achieve foreign policy goals (notably supporting subversion in the affairs of others), and shared a common aversion to France's continued position in Africa. Instead of being strength, however, it weakened their hold on the development of inter-African affairs because it spurred a rival group to establish itself, which is covered in chapter six.

Archival Sources Used

Due to the African approach of the study, this project tried to rely as much as possible on primary sources from Africa. Although none of the three African countries I visited allowed researchers access to the archives of their respective foreign ministries, the national archives or libraries nevertheless held invaluable material for a few reasons. For one, the period under study coincided with the existence of the short-lived Mali Federation and the time in office of Senghor's deputy in government, Mamadou Dia, whose entire records are kept in the National Archive of Senegal. The 'Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963)' and 'Fonds de la Présidence et Vice-Présidence du Conseil (1956 – 1962)', by far the best collection of documents on inter-African affairs from the perspective of the francophone African states of the ex-AOF, its documents range from the establishment of de Gaulle's *Communauté* in the fall of 1958 to Senegal's participation in the *Union Africaine et Malgache* in the summer of 1963. The collections included documents related to inter-African diplomacy (including inter-state communications, secret intelligence assessments, and foreign ministry reports), some verbatim talks with African leaders, Dia and Senghor's key speeches, the tensions between Senghor, Dia, and Keita of French Soudan, as well as many documents relating to the important issue of Mauritania's independence and the formation of the Monrovia Group.

The time period of this study also coincided with Nkrumah's presidency, and the Bureau of African Affairs Collection at the Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD) in Accra holds an important amount of documentation on foreign affairs given he was effectively wielding Ghana's foreign policy from 1958-66. Patience was a virtue in this archive given that the organisation of folders was chaotic, but overall the collection was well rewarding: documents included foreign policy reports, cabinet meeting minutes, correspondence between Nkrumah and foreign leaders, secret intelligence reports, Nkrumah's orders to his foreign ministry and diplomatic missions, propaganda material, secret plots against foreign governments

(including an incredibly important one against Mauritania), and the coming together and dissolution of the Casablanca Group. Not many documents were cited from the Padmore Library in this thesis as a considerable amount of more time would be required to excavate (quite literally as it turns out) the material held in the very damp cellar and on completely unorganised shelves. Despite Jeffrey Ahlman's work a few years prior to organise and catalogue the material in the cellars of the library, when I visited in March 2017, multitudes of folders were strewn across the damp floor, pages were ripped off, folders piled into wheelbarrows, and many folders from the catalogue could no be found. It was also frustrating that W. Scott Thompson, by virtue of being in Ghana at the time of the coup, had access to foreign ministry documents in the late 1960s and that they are no longer available to peruse. Despite this, the collections at PRAAD gave a large enough window for researchers into inter-African affairs from 1957-63. Luckily, Thompson brought back to Oxford a large verbatim transcript of the April 1958 Conference of Independent African States, the first time African leaders met in the postcolonial period. This microfilm, the only version of this document accessible to scholars, is available at the Bodleian Library.

The National Archives of Tunisia, despite the country's dismissal of its repressive regime in the revolution in 2011, is still unavailable for consultation on all documents on the post-independence period. The National Library of Tunisia, however, contained important documentation regarding the Mauritanian Crisis and the breaking of Tunisian-Moroccan relations. Perhaps when the Tunisian archives will finally be open to researchers will we get better insight of Tunisia's foreign policies in Africa and the Maghreb, which were deeply intertwined given the attention Habib Bourguiba gave to the Mauritanian Question as well as his African alliance with Senegal. The inside story of Egypt's foreign policy in Africa, on the other hand, would profit greatly from opening the archives in Cairo which unfortunately remains shut after the end of the events of 2011-3. Nasser initially had great plans for Egypt's presence in Africa, and he built several institutions, including a research institute, to not only expand Egypt's knowledge of the African continent, but also to help coordinate policy. Much of the same could be said of the Royal Moroccan Archives, which undoubtedly holds many documents on African affairs in this period. Sadly unopened for research with the exception of special appointment to the King, Abdeljelil Temimi remains the only person to have been allowed to consult these archives to study the effects of the Mauritanian Question on inter-Maghrebi affairs. Some of the

documents he collected were published in an edited volume in the early 2010s from a Tunisian press, and it was of great help to this thesis.

European states, France, the United Kingdom, and Belgium have vast amounts of documents relating to African affairs over this period. Belgium's African archive, conveniently located inside the Foreign Ministry with the diplomatic document collections, was a gold mine for any researcher on inter-African affairs, reports on the many conferences hosted by African leaders and states, as well as the propaganda campaigns waged by both Nasser and Nkrumah on African soil. These documents were a very good source of information because of their level of incredible detail. This was ostensibly due to the fact that the Belgian state, at the time holding on to its colony of the Congo, was incredibly fearful of any ideologies or influence from the independent African states onto its colonial subjects which could jeopardise their grip on its colony and its position in Africa. The Belgian authorities, unlike the French and the British, also took the propaganda and actions from African leaders at face value and therefore they rarely came to the conclusion that the various African nationalist figures were 'communist sympathisers' or the like. Since they took African leaders and their propaganda seriously and correctly came to the conclusion that they were anti-colonial in nature, the documents of the Belgian archives were given precedence over the other European documents.

The two main French archives were also consulted – the centre in Nantes, which holds documents produced by consular and embassy staff and sent to Paris, and the centre in La Courneuve (in the North of Paris) which holds documents of the French Foreign Ministry, Le Quai d'Orsay. The documents of the embassy of Egypt were tremendously helpful in helping determine the early foreign policy of Gamal Abdel Nasser as he navigated the problematic domestic situation he inherited after the 1952 coup. Furthermore, the documents at the embassy level also revealed the extent and effect of his influence with his propaganda campaigns by radio, but also the vast network of material support he operated in North Africa in order to keep the flow of weaponry open to Algeria. The Foreign Ministry documents were very helpful to bridge gaps where there were no existing documentation from African archives on particular episodes. Archives in Africa, unlike at Kew or Paris, are notoriously fickle for lost documentation because this leaves gaps for the construction of narratives, undoubtedly because of a much lower amount of funding and government interest. Since France was very closely tied to West Africa,

especially at the time of de Gaulle's referendum, the French diplomatic documents were an invaluable resource about Ghana's attempts to influence the Francophone African states into claiming their immediate independence.

Lastly, I consulted the Kwame Nkrumah Papers at the archives at the Moorland-Springarn Research Centre at Howard University in Washington, DC. Upon being deposed in a coup in 1966 whilst away on a trip to Asia, Nkrumah's closest advisors took with them many state documents in his possession. The collection is very eclectic and contains some documentation relating to Ghanaian foreign policy, yet these were already well studied by W. Scott Thompson and were generally not useful for this study. The collection also includes much post-1966 correspondence between Nkrumah and a host of state leaders and private individuals. These were unhelpful yet conveyed the message that even after he was deposed in a coup, Nkrumah kept putting pressure on others to accept his view of African unity. The only helpful documents found for this study were part of the correspondence between Nkrumah and George Padmore from the mid-1950s which highlighted the advice that Nkrumah begin to build an African policy for West Africa.

Chapter I: Postcolonial Foreign Policies of Egypt and Ghana

The foreign policies adopted by post-colonial African states were the catalyst for the problematic inter-African relations from March 1957 to May 1963. Perhaps the most detrimental reason lurking behind this development was that prior to 1957 African leaders placed much of their energy on their own troublesome domestic politics. Since none of the leaders of these states took care and time to think through what the independent African continent should stand for, what it should politically look like, and especially how inter-African relations should be conducted between the new independent states, a lot of friction and suspicion between them arose when they finally began to establish their continental foreign policies. Thus, not only did each resort to shaping their own African policies in their own image, they also began to use them as a device to secure power at home. The fact that they linked their own visions of what Africa should represent with the goal of security at home raised the stakes each had in continental politics and ensured a great level of speed, determination, and ruthlessness to chase these goals. Beginning in 1957 inter-African relations became tremendously important for African leaders

and owing to the stakes they placed on their goals made them suspicious of one another and their relations acrimonious.

Each of the cases of Ghana, Egypt, and Senegal share many differences owing to a host of different circumstances, yet what is most important is what they have in common. For each of them, their leaders were crucial for the shaping the foreign policy outlook. Not only were their personalities and own personal goals in African affairs important factors, but none more so than their desire to cement their power at home. Both Senghor and Nasser were not hugely popular and faced significant opposition at home, while Nkrumah, perhaps a little bit more secure because he crushed his opposition in 1957-8, still had to prove to a large part of his population that he was the right man to lead the new state. All three therefore needed to prove themselves and achieving foreign policy goals would do the trick. Each of these states suffered, albeit on different levels, from domestic pressures and this greatly limited the foreign policy options they could pursue, and all ended throwing themselves into the pit of African politics. For Nkrumah it was a desire to seek domestic legitimisation by showing the Ghanaian people that he could lead Africa to unite to form a shield against colonialism. Ghana's population responded well to the idea of their nation leading the continent and given that 70 per cent of the population had never been able to vote in elections in the 1950s, Nkrumah saw it as a way to build popularity and insulate himself further from any domestic threat. For Nasser, his foreign policy in Africa was the solution to insulate himself from two major domestic threats to his rule, the Egyptian population and the military. By building Egypt's new identity and sense of purpose as an anti-colonial state deeply involved in the Third World, he was able to shift the focus away from domestic politics and stop the incessant calls for a restoration of democracy and pluralism in the public sphere. As for Senghor, who unlike Nkrumah never believed in abolishing pluralism from Senegalese society, the pressure exerted by his domestic opposition was the most significant and consistent challenge to his rule. After dangerously acquiescing to demands to seek unity with neighbouring states (he nearly lost power to a foreign state), he undertook a foreign policy to convince his nation and the continent that nationalism and a good working relationship with Europe was the only way to build Africa's future.

‘Revolutionary’ Egypt: Fragile Regime, Bold Foreign Policy

Every credible and careful analysis of Egypt’s foreign policy from the ‘revolution’ or Officers’ Coup of 1952 to the end of the 1960s correctly places the figure of Gamal Abdel Nasser on the centre stage.⁴⁷ In matters of foreign policy, Nasser was indeed dominant. Very ambitious, manipulative, resolute, crafty, and often reckless, Nasser acquired the ultimate skill of any great statesman during the Suez War of 1956 – the ability to turn a serious setback into an opportunity – and he became one of the most influential leaders in the Third World. But as newer historiography is beginning to demonstrate, Nasser started his regime without the famous confidence he was showing in the late 1950s and 1960s; despite becoming a strong authoritarian leader, he never had a completely free hand to wage his foreign policy. Nasser’s new regime was deeply affected by domestic constraints and Egypt’s recent past, and his foreign policy reflected the problems he faced during his early years in power. The strongest challenge that Nasser faced from 1952-6 were from the military and Egypt’s population and a careful balancing act had to be found to ensure the new regime could conserve power. Beginning in 1954, Nasser worked out this balancing act by establishing and directing a bold foreign policy as a tool to insulate himself in power because it could build his legitimacy as leader as well as steer the country’s attention away from domestic problems. While it never became the most important front of his foreign policy, the African continent nevertheless represented a very significant opportunity as the continent was on the brink of decolonisation and up for grabs. From 1954, Nasser reshaped Egypt’s identity as an anti-colonial power and sold the idea of a new foreign policy based on active opposition to colonialism to Egyptians. From aiding nationalist movements in North Africa from 1954 onwards to becoming an important Third World anti-colonial figure with his dashing appearance at the Bandung conference in 1955, he very quickly capitalised on his military loss at Suez in the summer of 1956 to spearhead an anti-colonial campaign in the rest of Africa. Nasser’s grip on power was contingent on finding success in international affairs, and this explains his zealotry to expand Egypt’s influence in Africa and the speed with which he entered African affairs.

⁴⁷ Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis: Postwar Development Diplomacy and the Struggle over Third World Industrialization, 1945-1956* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), Joel Gordon, *Nasser’s Blessed Movement: Egypt’s Free Officers and the July Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen: Egypt’s Road to Revolt* (London: Verso, 2014), and Mustapha Ben Halim, *Libya’s Hidden Pages of History: A Memoir*, trans. Leslie McLoughlin (Nicosia: Rimal Publications, 2014), 261.

Nasser's reign began in 1952 in dire circumstances. Plagued with colonial intrigues, the growing interest of the superpowers, and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, Egypt would not be easily navigated through these troubled waters. Due to these important external factors, many accounts of Egypt's foreign policy focus on these fronts and derive their explanations of Egypt's foreign policy behaviour from them.⁴⁸ These factors were very important in the crafting of foreign policy, but newer historiography shows that domestic considerations were central to Nasser's foreign policy. A struggling economy, social problems, and the issue of the regime's popularity are given as major reasons for the regime's selection of its foreign policy orientation.⁴⁹ Some, like Joel Gordon, also correctly argue that the regime used foreign policy as a tool to shift the population's focus away from domestic issues. Gordon further claims that it was only in 1955 that Nasser was confident enough to wage a foreign policy.⁵⁰ Unlike this account, I claim the Egyptian leader was forced to wage a foreign policy as a tool for domestic purposes and to solidify his regime even earlier. The 1955 date is incorrect, and part of the mistake is due to limiting the focus of the Egyptian regime's policies towards the Cold War superpowers, the Arab-Israeli Conflict, and the stirrings of an Afro-Asian Bloc. In reality, Egypt's foray into international affairs began much closer to home in Africa, and this early foreign policy helped to shape subsequent events on which much attention has been lavished, bringing Egypt into direct conflict with the colonial powers and Israel in the fall of 1956, in turn helping bring the superpowers' focus on the Middle East, and built Nasser's image of a great Afro-Asian figure. Most importantly, Egypt's early foreign policy in Africa brought lasting effects on African politics and helped shape the course of inter-African politics.

The Backdrop of Revolutionary Egypt's Foreign Policy

In 1952-3, problems and potential threats arose for Nasser, ensuring his position atop Egypt's political hierarchy was never entirely secure.⁵¹ The main domestic issues he faced and

⁴⁸ Jovan Cavoski, "Constructing Nasser's Neutralism: Egypt and the Rise of Nonalignment in the Middle East," in Lorenz Luthi, ed, *The Regional Cold Wars in Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East: Crucial Periods and Turning Points* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015): 88-107, Salim Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2004), and Rashid Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis: The Cold War and American Dominance in the Middle East* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009).

⁴⁹ A good recent example of this growing historiography is found in Guy Laron's account of Egypt's early foreign policy after the 1952 coup until the 1956 Suez Crisis. See, Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis*.

⁵⁰ Joel Gordon, *Nasser's Blessed Movement*, 13.

⁵¹ Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 22, 23-4, 28, Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis*, 117, and Joel Gordon, *Nasser's Blessed Movement*, 4.

needed to resolve were on three interconnected fronts: leadership attempts from other figures associated with the coup, mounting threats of an ouster from troublesome units in the armed forces, and the need to become popular and gain the unflinching support from the Egyptian masses. The first two years of the new regime's time in power were treacherous for Nasser as they spent them defining their 'revolution'.⁵² Most of their efforts were done under the umbrella of changing the old order in Egyptian political life, in which the politically and economically troublesome 1940s were blamed on the monarchy, the old landowning elite, and the warring and corrupt political parties. Dismantling the old regime was the junta's (which named itself the Revolutionary Command Council or RCC) primary objective, and once they seized power they immediately announced dramatic changes which stunned and appealed to many segments of the general public. In the months following the change of power, the RCC (led by Nasser) began a limited land reform program that fractured the largest land holdings and allowed common peasants land ownership, abolished the old political parties, began a purge of the military and the intelligentsia of those tied to the old elite.⁵³ After a short period of elation, resentment quickly grew in Egypt.

While the general population began to worry about the slow pace of the land, economic, and political reforms, anger in the ranks of the armed forces was simmering for many reasons. The armed forces were early supporters of the RCC's takeover because the King and his henchmen in the military's upper ranks were held responsible for the army's humiliation against the Israelis in the 1948 Palestine War.⁵⁴ Their support was also contingent on a few factors. For one, many in the armed forces wished to see the RCC restore parliamentary life and return to the barracks. Secondly, for the armed forces to get a larger share of the national budget and be given better equipment and weaponry (inadequate weaponry was blamed for not being able to fight the Israelis properly) in order not to be humiliated again on the battlefield.⁵⁵ A few months after the

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ "N. 1177/AL. M. Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence M. Robert Schuman, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Le Caire, 13 août 1952," "N. 1446/AL. M. Éric de Carbonnel, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Ambassade de France en Égypte, à son excellence M. Robert Schuman, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Le Caire, le 31 octobre 1952," 353PO/2/48, Centre des Archives Diplomatiques de Nantes (henceforth CADN), and "N.109/AL. M. Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence Monsieur Georges Bidault, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Le Caire, le 21 janvier 1953." 353/PO/2/49, CADN.

⁵⁴ Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 13.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 11, 13, Joel Gordon, *Nasser's Blessed Movement*, 127, Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis*, 62. Charles Issawi also discovered that since World War I the Egyptian military had been able to obtain larger shares of the national budget for itself (from 12 to 21%), but given the resentment of the quality of weaponry, it was clearly not

coup, the continuing wave of the RCC's forced retirements, firings, and arrests were beginning to be thought of as unjustified and they stirred resentment and rumours of a military coup against the RCC.⁵⁶ while Nasser's promise to the armed forces of obtaining better weaponry remained unfulfilled, he was blindsided by a branch of the military because of his crackdown of army figures and the RCC's policies.

One of Nasser's first policies regarding the armed forces was to bring it under his thumb and to prevent it from playing a role in Egyptian politics. In December 1952, he ordered a list drawn with the names of officers whom were either liberals who posed a challenge to the current regime, or low-ranking members of the Free Officers movement because they could harbor political ambitions. This list was extensive – 4,000 officers – just over half were relocated to cushy civilian administration jobs and 800 were forced to retire.⁵⁷ This measure unsurprisingly offended some in the military. As the French embassy noted, many officers, particularly in the artillery corps, were not pleased with the government's firings and forced retirements of fellow officers. The RCC, they argued in secret, should not be getting involved directly in the army's affairs.⁵⁸ In early January 1953, the feeling of resentment intensified in the artillery branch. The RCC had just banned political parties and kept up its efforts to arrest dissident officers on the trumped-up charge of supporting the 'ancien régime.'⁵⁹ For the artillery officers, this was the last straw. Not only had the new regime brutally intruded in the army's affairs, but it also contradicted their political outlook. Many artillery officers gathered to petition Nasser and argued that he was wrong to betray their hopes. The coup was not a means to suspend plurality in Egypt, but only of liquidating the royalty and the corrupt politicians. Parliamentary life, they demanded, should be restored. They asked Nasser if he could allow more equal representation (artillery officers were a minority within the RCC) but he turned them away. To his horror, they began to speak with the Muslim brotherhood and decided to act decisively against him and the

enough for the military. See, Charles Issawi, *Egypt in Revolution: An Economic Analysis* (Wesport: Greenwood Press, 1986), 43.

⁵⁶ "N. 1746/AL. M. Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence M. Robert Schuman, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Le Caire, 12 décembre 1952," 353PO/2/48, CADN, and "N.109/AL. M. Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence Monsieur Georges Bidault, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Le Caire, le 21 janvier 1953." 353/PO/2/49, CADN.

⁵⁷ Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 16-7.

⁵⁸ "N. 1746/AL. M. Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence M. Robert Schuman, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. Le Caire, 12 decembre 1952." 353 PO/2/48, CADN.

⁵⁹ "N. 109/AL. M. Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Egypte, à son excellence Monsieur Georges Bidault, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. Le Caire, le 21 janvier 1953." 353 PO/2/49, CADN.

RCC. Learning on 16 January from an informant in the nick of time that they were about to use artillery units to arrest members of the RCC, take Cairo, and restore parliamentary life, Nasser quickly had them arrested.⁶⁰ Nasser had been surprised that an important part of the army had almost mutinied and come close to throwing him from power.

Nasser's relationship with the wider Egyptian public, despite the popular but restrained land reform program, soured quickly in the months after the coup. Nasser understood that in order to undertake a program of radical economic change for the Egyptian people, he required foreign help with investment and technical aid. His solution to this issue and to find weaponry for the armed forces was to turn to the United States.⁶¹ For the next two years he continued the former regime's policies as he pinned his hopes on negotiations with the Americans to deliver change for his country, and tried to convince the Egyptian people of something suspicious and difficult for them to accept – an aid package from the West. Unfortunately, the initial wave of enthusiasm in Egyptian society after the coup dwindled as he was simply unable to please its hopes, yet he pressed on knowing his own popularity was at risk. Students, angered by his tilt towards the Americans called him “Colonel Jimmy” in public, trapped him in a Cairo University office during a visit, and forced him to stop a speech early by heckling him during a speech in Alexandria. Workers were not pleased with the lack of change in labour policies and the stagnation of salaries and they shouted insults at the RCC when they appeared in public.⁶² His popularity also took a further hit because he was widely believed to be the authoritarian leader behind the termination of Egypt's democracy.⁶³ Managing the country's affairs as they had always been while hoping for an aid package came at great expense to his own popularity, and the man he had put as a figurehead leader of the RCC, Muhammad Neguib, became the darling of the people and worse, of an influential cavalry unit in the armed forces as well.⁶⁴

By 1953 Neguib was becoming a real threat to Nasser and the RCC because it had become obvious to him that he was a mere figurehead as president of Egypt. Neguib simply did not have much of an opinion in the RCC, and Nasser and the other officers in the RCC simply

⁶⁰ Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 30.

⁶¹ Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis*, 60-2, and Charles Issawi, *Egypt in Revolution*, 53.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ For a great idea of how Nasser was seen in this period by Egyptian society, see Ahmed Abul-Fath, *L'affaire Nasser* (Paris: Plon, 1962).

⁶⁴ Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 17-8.

ignored him. The insulted Naguib therefore began to side with the public and found allies in the armed forces, notably the cavalry corps.* Nasser was still trying to get a significant aid package and weaponry from the Americans which would solve the problem with the armed forces and the general public, but after the attempted coup by the artillery, Neguib went behind his back to solve the problem and threatened to derail Nasser's plans. In late January 1953 the figurehead leader walked into the Soviet embassy and asked if Josef Stalin would allow the sale of weaponry to Egypt. After failing to gather a positive answer, Neguib tried the same with the Czechoslovak Government a few months later, and asked if Egypt could quickly purchase 100 light tanks for its armoured corps, clearly in a bid to help his favoured faction of the armed forces.⁶⁵ The move surprised Nasser and prompted him to retract the request and to sideline him from the ongoing negotiations with Great Britain over the status of the Suez Canal region. Furthermore, Nasser re-affirmed to the British Government that he was the man to negotiate for Egypt and that Neguib was not.⁶⁶ Throughout 1953 and the first months of 1954, Naguib toured the country and found a large amount support throughout Egyptian society – from the middle class to the landed elite and intelligentsia – all of whom wanted a restoration of democracy.⁶⁷ The Nasser-Naguib rivalry continued and finally came to a head in February 1954 when Nasser and the RCC cut him out from their meetings and told him to accept his mere role as figurehead. Neguib surprised them by resigning and Nasser put him under house arrest. Once the information hit the streets that their leader was brushed aside, Neguib's many followers staged violent protests.⁶⁸

Nasser gladly accepted Naguib's resignation and put him under house arrest, thinking the rivalry was finally over. Naguib's followers in the army, however, objected and staged a sit-in at the cavalry mess hall in protest. They soon gave their demands – the re-instatement of Naguib, the dismissal of the RCC, and a transition to democracy.⁶⁹ To diffuse the tension, Nasser went to the mess hall to meet with them. Unbeknownst to the leader of the RCC, he was walking into a

* The literature uses the term 'cavalry' since that is what it was still called in the early 1950s, but these units had become armored units (with tanks, reconnaissance motor vehicles, etc) having ditched horses in the decades prior.

⁶⁵ Nasser was clearly taken aback by Neguib's move, and he later notified the Czechs that they did not wish to buy the tanks from them. See, Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis*, 67-8.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 32, and Ahmed Abul-Fath, *L'affaire Nasser* (Paris: Plon, 1962), 100-1, 117.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 32-3, and Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis*, 68-9.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 32-3.

trap. The mutinied officers refused to let anyone else into the hall and he was made to sit down in front of shouting officers as tanks noisily surrounded them outside to intimidate him. Nasser had no other choice but to fold and concede to their demands. As he hung his head in shame back at the RCC headquarters, convinced he had lost everything, the Egyptian intelligence service went to work without his knowledge to end the mutiny. In a remarkable show of force, artillery units were sent to surround the tanks and the mutinied officers as a propaganda campaign kicked off to spread the news that the mutiny was supporting communism. Salah Salem, a member of the RCC and head of propaganda, hit the airwaves and stated that Muhammad Naguib had never been a free officer and declared him ousted from the RCC. The mutiny was shut down and Nasser saved, but Naguib's ouster angered Cairo's citizens who saw him as their true hero and they flooded the streets chanting his name while vilifying Nasser's.⁷⁰ Nasser's hand was forced and he re-instated Naguib because of this pressure on 27 February and promise of an eventual return to parliamentary rule on 4 March, but he was merely biding his time. Throughout March, Nasser unleashed his security organs to arrest those responsible for the mutiny, further purging elements in the army that could meddle in politics and threaten his rule.⁷¹ By the end of March 1954, the now-purged army completely fied behind Nasser as he proclaimed a reversal of his promises to allow the free officers to vote, and let the old political parties to participate in the interest of preventing the old order of rampant corruption and inefficiency from coming back.⁷²

The armed forces' mutinies of 1953 and 1954 shook Nasser profoundly. He learned that despite his efforts to control the army, conspiracies against him were still possible. He had not forgotten how he had risen through the military to take power at a time of the army's discontent, and he understood more than ever that he could ill afford to ignore the demands and hopes of the military. These hopes created the basis of an important pact between the army and Nasser after he came to power. Should the army feel betrayed again, Nasser understood it would mean a shifting of the army's support away from him towards a more suitable contender. He had to bring the army to his side after shaking it with forced resignations and arrests. Co-option and bribery were therefore the only solutions promising rapid results. Thus, Nasser handed out promotions to key officers and increased the army's military expenditures from 17% to 25% of Egypt's

⁷⁰ Ibid, 32-4.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid, 36.

budget.⁷³ This arrangement was in Nasser's immediate interest because keeping the army happily behind him would give him a great measure of legitimacy as the leader of Egypt. Yet the army's co-option only bought him a little bit of time as the army still felt humiliation from its dreadful performance in 1948. He had to deliver on its demands to get outfitted with new weaponry to restore its pride if he was to stave off any other attempts to rob him of his rule.

Thus, one of Nasser's key foreign policy objectives in 1954 was to get an arms deal with a foreign power for one of his largest domestic concerns, the army. Although Nasser did secure a significant weapons deal with the Soviet Union, he was still reported as not completely insulated from the threat of the army as potentially dissenting officers were still being arrested and purged from the army as late as January 1957.⁷⁴ As new historiography is beginning to show, Nasser was never free from the threat of the army during his rule because what had appeared to be a trusted aide and friend at the head of the armed forces, Hakim Amer, led and used the army as his personal fiefdom and often forced Egypt to deviate from Nasser's policies until the aftermath of the Six Day War of 1967.⁷⁵ The threat of the armed forces remained a real problem for Nasser, and one that he could at best manage while treading carefully.

In their first year in power, Nasser and his RCC were met quickly with simmering popular unrest and possible revolt from what they thought were their power base, the military. These domestic problems were indeed besieging the new regime, and their combination of on-the-spot management and luck was seeing them through, albeit barely. A more sustainable strategy needed to be devised to keep domestic pressures in check while giving their revolution meaning and direction. An important part of the solution that Nasser adopted, and very early on, was to redirect popular attention outwards and well away from Egypt's domestic troubles. Beginning in early December 1952, Nasser began a radio and media propaganda campaign aimed at inflaming domestic public opinion towards France for its conduct in Tunisia and

⁷³ Ibid, 39, and CADN. CADN 378 PO/6/879. "No. 440/AL. Robert Gillet, Charge d'Affaires a.i., a son excellence Monsieur Georges Bidault, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, Le Caire, le 2 avril 1954."

⁷⁴ "B.02.1.- Pa/ab. Rapport Politique No. 1. Le Caire, le 11 janvier 1957." E 2300 1000/716 BD: 174, Swiss Federal Archives.

⁷⁵ For a compelling argument about the army's (and Amer's) influence in steering Egypt's foreign affairs (and often undercutting Nasser), see Guy Laron, *The Six-Day War: The Breaking of the Middle East* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

Morocco.⁷⁶ The campaign was particularly captivating because it was so vitriolic and sensationalist. For instance, French Government officials were appalled that the propaganda campaign claimed the French army was waging a “war of extermination” against the Istiqlal Party in Morocco, that the French built concentration camps in Tunisia, and razed the Tunisian city of Kelibia to the ground. The French Government was also concerned that these fictitious news reports were quoted at length at the Arab League.⁷⁷ Among the population, these reports gained traction as the French embassy received letters from the Egyptian public protesting French treatment of Arabs in North Africa.⁷⁸ The idea of a propaganda campaign against the French was not new at all, since the Egyptian monarchy had sporadically used the trick before, but what was different was that Nasser injected it with new vigour and starting in 1954, expanded it as part of a wider strategy.

Nasser’s tool of vilifying the forces of colonialism and imperialism to divert the public’s attention grew into the foundation of his grand strategy and shape Egypt’s new identity. From 1954 onwards, Nasser’s foreign policy reflected this new strategy and became profoundly anti-colonial and anti-imperial, and most often aimed at the French and the British.⁷⁹ While propaganda campaigns did continue, it was not long afterward that Nasser turned another of the monarchy’s unfinished projects into an opportunity. In the late 1940s, King Farouk had been interested in waging some sort of North African policy to oppose its dominating colonial power, France. Egypt therefore helped resistance groups of North Africa and launched sporadic propaganda attacks on the French and harbouring these groups’ leaders, including the famous leader of the Rif Rebellion, Abdel Krim, and important members of the next generation of North African politicians like Allal al-Fassi of Morocco, Tayib Slim of Tunisia, and Mohammed Khider of Algeria.⁸⁰ These were allowed to freely associate in Egypt under Farouk, and although

⁷⁶ “M. Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence Monsieur Georges Bidault, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. 16 janvier 1953.” 378 PO/6 913, CADN.

⁷⁷ Ibid, and “Ambafrance Le Caire, pour Diplomatie Paris. No. 5/6. Le 2 janvier 1953.” 378 PO/6 913, CADN.

⁷⁸ A good example of these was a letter written by high school students from Khedive Ismail High School to the French Ambassador, Couve de Murville. See, “Monsieur l’Ambassadeur de l’Égypte de France en Égypte au Caire.” 353 PO2/102, CADN. Letters containing threats were also sent to the embassy and are contained in this folder.

⁷⁹ Nasser’s apologists later reflected on his foreign policy as always have had the goal of liquidating colonialism and imperialism, but evidence in the archives show that he used propaganda campaigns before this for domestic reasons. See, Mohamed Fayek, “The July 23 Revolution and Africa,” in Haseeb, Khair el-Din, ed. *The Arabs and Africa* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 98-9.

⁸⁰ “N. 330/AL. M. Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence Monsieur Georges Bidault, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Le Caire, le 26 février 1953,” 353 PO/2/102, CADN, and “Ordre du jour,” 353 PO/2/25, CADN.

he wanted them to have an effect on French policy in North Africa, they were too poorly organised (mostly due to Abdel Krim's inability to work and compromise with others) and underfunded to kick-start any form of insurrection.⁸¹ Farouk's North African policy, if could be called that, was therefore only a poorly attended pet project. It was not until 1953-4 that Nasser pulled the project off the shelf and breathed new life into it. In the aftermath of the 1952 coup these groups were allowed to remain in Egypt, as well as use Egypt's new radio network to broadcast their cause both to the Egyptian public as well as the rest of the Arab World.⁸² In the spring of 1953, Nasser began to pay more attention to the North Africans because he saw some value in it for Egypt. He allowed Abdel Krim to set up a guerrilla training centre to train North African expats in Ismailia, on the condition that half of the graduates could be called to serve in the Canal Zone against British troops if the RCC called them to action.⁸³ Nasser also ordered the establishment of a Department for Arab Affairs and charged Fathi al-Dib, one of his most trusted assistants, to examine and report on the situation in North Africa and to draw up Egypt's policy towards North Africa in accordance with the values of the 'Revolution of 23 July'.⁸⁴ Al-Dib quickly got to work and in late 1952 and early 1953, met the leaders of North Africa's resistance upon their return to Cairo.⁸⁵ This groundwork established important relationships between Nasser and important resistance leaders like Allal al-Fassi of Morocco, Salah Ben Youssef of Tunisia, and the figure would become the most important, Ahmed Ben Bella of Algeria.⁸⁶

With his obvious preoccupation with domestic affairs, Nasser still had not introduced or even defined Egypt's new direction in foreign affairs. Putting one in place would help redirect the attention of the Egyptian population and the armed forces and perhaps even galvanize them behind a new goal. What Nasser needed was a general theme for this foreign policy, a safe target to focus on, and a place where Egypt could be effective. With the French fighting a losing battle at Dien Bien Phu in their colony of Indochina, they became an attractive target because their grip

⁸¹ "N. 41/AL. Monsieur Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence Robert Schuman, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. 7 janvier 1952," 353 PO/2/102, CADN.

⁸² Fathi al-Dib, *Abdel Nasser et la Révolution algérienne* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985), 11-2. It must be acknowledged that his version is the only published version of the events.

⁸³ "No. 766/AL. M. Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence Monsieur Georges Bidault, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. 1er juin 1953," 378 PO/6/881, CADN.

⁸⁴ Fathi al-Dib, *Abdel Nasser et la Révolution algérienne*, 11.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 11, and CADN 353 PO/2/102. "N. 330/AL. M. Maurice Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France en Égypte, à son excellence Monsieur Georges Bidault, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Le Caire, le 26 février 1953."

⁸⁶ Fathi al-Dib, *Abdel Nasser et la Révolution algérienne*, 12-3.

on empire looked weak. On 16 March 1954, Nasser and al-Dib set up a meeting with some North African leaders and divulged details of a new policy for the first time. Egypt was to play a central role in North African politics by bringing every resistance group under its wing to ensure cooperation to one end – the liquidation of colonialism in North Africa. To justify Egypt's involvement, Nasser invoked the resistance movements' need to unite to maximize the effects of their efforts, Egypt's fundamental duty to come to the aid of fellow Arabs trying to liberate themselves from colonial oppression, and the great timing in their favour since France was mired in the jungles of Indochina.⁸⁷ A further meeting was held on April 3rd in Cairo with the North African resistance movements and they swore to form one committee in Cairo, to work together, and coordinate their actions. Nasser was also very impressed by Ahmed Ben Bella's conduct at the meeting and of his intricate plan to wage a sustained armed resistance campaign against the French for their independence. Ben Bella made it clear that what he needed from Egyptians to execute the plan were weapons. Nasser not only ordered al-Dib to begin coordinate Egypt's policy with Ben Bella, but he immediately became convinced that Ben Bella was the man Egypt should be closest to because he was the most organised leader of the Algerian struggle. Shortly thereafter, Ben Bella, al-Dib, Nasser, and the head of Egypt's secret services concluded an agreement in principle for Egypt's material and political support to the Algerian struggle.⁸⁸

Naturally, Nasser's eagerness to be generous to the Algerians appeared altruistic but it concealed important opportunities in foreign affairs. Being the first state to come to the material and political aid of the Algerians meant there was potential to extend a sphere of influence there and the granting of future favours for Egypt like access to their resources or favourable trade agreements which could see them become large importers of Egyptian manufactured goods.⁸⁹ Becoming the largest donor to the Algerian struggle for independence could also help Nasser score points at the Arab League and help him monopolise its direction. Most important for Nasser for his present situation, however, was that putting a focus on Algeria could bring the population's focus of attention away from affairs at home. While steering Egypt's foreign policy on an anti-colonial path would corral support from Egypt's society, supplying weaponry to the

⁸⁷ Ibid, 12-3.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 15-6, 18-9, 24-5.

⁸⁹ Egypt was at this time seeking to enlarge its domestic production in order to become an exporting nation in the Developing World in order to stave off Egypt's prior dependence on the West. See Guy Laron, "Semi-peripheral countries and the invention of the 'Third World', 1955-65," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 9 (2014): 1548-9.

Algerians was a problem because the army was already short on stocks. Nasser needed to tread lightly because he risked further confrontations with the military if it were discovered that he was depleting Egypt's military capacity to favour a foreign force in a foreign venture. Thus, the first shipments of weapons to the Algerians were very small and could only equip at most 200 men.⁹⁰ Nasser's wish to help the Algerians put much added pressure on him to find weapons, and with none forthcoming from the United States after years of negotiations, Nasser was forced to seek the Soviet/Czechoslovak route in the spring of 1955.⁹¹ This arms deal solved an important problem for Nasser as he finally made the military happy by replacing the Egyptian stocks of dubious quality with new Soviet arms. The arms deal also made it possible to shift the dubious Egyptian arms to the Algerians who badly needed them to fight the French, saving him some expense. This was a very clever move by Nasser because he effectively killed two birds with one stone – his new foreign policy was on track while he attenuated a major problem between him and his military. As a result, arms smuggling was reported by the British and French to be proliferating in North Africa as Egypt ramped up its commitment to the Algerians.⁹² A caravan route was set up in the Libyan desert, ships took arms and supplies for the Algerians to many North African ports for eventual smuggling into Algeria, and even commercial airlines were used to ferry ammunition in their cargo holds.⁹³ The French did correctly suspect Nasser was behind the arms smuggling and for sending commandos trained in Egypt, but Nasser gave his 'soldier's word' that he was not responsible.⁹⁴ The sheer hike in volume of arms shipments and the fact that lied when confronted by the French shows Nasser's determination to see his North African policy affect change in the region, but also that he was very serious in putting Egypt on an active anti-colonial course.

Although Nasser did have a significant part of an effective foreign policy in place, it was not yet properly articulated to the wider Egyptian public. Nasser understood that he needed to

⁹⁰ Ibid, 42.

⁹¹ The historiography on Egypt's weapons deal with the Soviet Union has completely ignored this factor in Nasser's decision. For examples of this oversight, see Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis*, 108-9, and Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (London: Allen Lane, 2000), 126.

⁹² The French diplomatic archives in Nantes has many documents covering this issue. For a good example, see "Le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à M. l'Ambassadeur de France à Londres. Paris: Le 2 janvier 1956," 378 PO/6/913, CADN. Many more are included in this folder.

⁹³ Fathi al-Dib, *Nasser et la révolution algérienne*, 75-7, 78-81, "Ministère de la Justice. Note pour Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Bruxelles, le 30 novembre 1954," 13.007-4, Archives Diplomatiques Belges.

⁹⁴ "No Diplo 2725. De Paris. Reçu le 19.3.1956," 378 PO/6/913, CADN, and Christian Pineau, *1956/Suez* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1976), 41.

communicate with his country and respond to pressing questions because he wanted to raise the popularity of the new regime. Thus, he devised an important document building a bridge between them and the new regime and serving as a sort of ‘social contract’. This was particularly important at this juncture of the new regime’s hold on power because of the domestic turmoil it had just been through; in other words, either Nasser took Egypt on a new direction or he risked never being able to wriggle free from the domestic strife. Besides, the book was an answer to a very pressing question – where was Egypt going now that the Free Officers had liberated it from the monarchy? Hastily written by Nasser and published in September 1954, the *Philosophy of the Revolution* was written simply and widely distributed throughout Egypt because it was meant for easy mass consumption and designed for every Egyptian could understand, connect, and identify with.⁹⁵ The most striking aspect of Nasser’s manifesto is that it only briefly addressed the many domestic issues facing Egypt. Noting the new regime’s low popularity at home, Nasser credits his domestic political opponents as the culprits and asked his readers to pay them no mind because they were opportunistic, jealous, and only desiring to reap spoils of office.⁹⁶ Colonialism had been responsible for fracturing Egyptian society, he argued, and the previous generations of Egypt’s politicians of responded with words and a grievous lack of deeds, preventing the country from coming together. The new regime, he claimed, was genuinely addressing the “real conditions” facing the country and taking appropriate action.⁹⁷ Nasser acknowledged that while some of the measures were unpopular, they were justified because they would secure a bright future for the country.⁹⁸ Nasser also used the text to communicate to another troublesome sector of society, the military rank and file. He sympathised with them and agreed that the defective weaponry issued to them in 1948 was an absolute ‘scandal’. He reminded them that he too had been a soldier who had experienced the humiliation of 1948 because of faulty armament and poor leadership.⁹⁹ He dismissed rumours that the Revolution was just a coup by self-interested army officers who had held secret elections in the shadows. He reminded readers that had joined in protests in 1923 to restore the constitution, and that the military truly shared the hopes of all Egyptians and would do its duty to fulfil them.¹⁰⁰ It is very clear in the text that Nasser wanted to

⁹⁵ Joel Gordon, *Nasser’s Blessed Movement*, 188.

⁹⁶ Gamal Abdel Nasser, *The Philosophy of the Revolution* (Cairo: Mondiale Press, 1955), 45-7.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 40-5.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 47.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 11-3.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 15, 18-9, 23.

convince Egyptians that ‘the Revolution’ had good intentions for Egypt and promised that good change was indeed coming, but that the people and the armed forces needed to put their faith in the regime.

Instead of delving into the great detail in the problems facing Egypt, the bulk of Nasser’s text attempts to justify the Free Officer’s coup (which is referred to as ‘the Revolution’), the role of the RCC as the vanguard of the nation, and Egypt’s new role in foreign affairs and revealed the country’s important new direction abroad.¹⁰¹ This marked an important moment in Egypt’s history because Nasser was linking Egypt’s new identity and reason for being with its foreign policy direction. Nasser opened the last and most important (and certainly the most intricate) part of the text by stating that Egypt’s age of isolationism was over because it had a new role to play to be a positive influence in international affairs.¹⁰² By virtue of historic fate and geography, a great opportunity was up for grabs for a regional actor to step up to a great heroic role and Egypt was the one to do it.¹⁰³ Egypt’s new foreign policy orientation took inspiration from Egypt’s geographic identity and the need to expand Nasser’s project in Algeria – to help fuel anti-colonial resistance – onto a much bigger stage than North Africa. In the book he unpacked Egypt’s geographic identity and explained that it was a natural justification for Egypt to seek a role in other regions. Thus, he introduced the concept of Egypt’s position within ‘three circles’ – consisting of the Arab, African, and Islamic circles. These areas of special interest overlapped each other considerably by virtue of geography and tradition, he argued, thus Egypt belonged to all three and needed to be active in them.¹⁰⁴ What is revealing in the text is the hierarchy in which Nasser places these circles by order of importance. The Arab circle, he argued, was the most important as it was not only “the most closely connected to us” culturally and linguistically, but also because of historical and geographical reasons.¹⁰⁵ Egypt identified itself with the other Arab states because they all had a shared history and sense of purpose – the Arab World, Nasser opined, faced the common enemy of imperialism and therefore needed to unite in the coming anti-imperialist struggle.¹⁰⁶ Egypt also stood in the middle of the Arab World and Nasser

¹⁰¹ Nasser attempts to trick readers in his book by stating at the start that it is not to justify the role of the RCC’s coup and its rule, yet he spends the entirety of the book doing so. Ibid, 5.

¹⁰² Ibid, 53.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 55.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 53-6.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 55-6.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 61-2, 65-8.

believed that geography bestowed Egypt an important role to play in it.¹⁰⁷ It is very clear from Nasser's manifesto that he envisioned Egypt to try to unite the Arab World into a common struggle and play a leading role in Arab affairs. In chapter three, I demonstrate that Nasser's demonstrated importance to Arab affairs was a significant problem during the start of his diplomacy with other African states because it aroused their suspicion that he was seeking to promote an Arab agenda.

One of the most striking aspects of the idea of the three circles is Nasser's description and emphasis on the African circle because it underpinned his attitude and continental policy. The Egyptian leader believed that nationalist conflicts were to set Africa aflame which would pit the peoples under tutelage against their white colonial overlords. Just as he had argued in his case of the Arab circle, Egypt was located in Africa and could not be impartial in its affairs; it would therefore play a role there.¹⁰⁸ What is most important is that Nasser recognised that a new era was sweeping the continent – one which promised the potential for the end of colonialism. Africa, in short, was deemed a space of opportunity in which Egypt could act. As Nasser continues to give his thoughts on Africa, he claimed that “the people of Africa will continue to look up to us, who guard the northern gate of the continent and who are its connecting link to the world outside. We cannot, under any condition, relinquish our responsibility in helping, in every way possible, to diffuse the light of civilisation into the furthest part of that virgin jungle.”¹⁰⁹ Nasser also envisioned Cairo becoming an important centre of research of the continent to “enlighten” the minds of Africans and promote Africa's progress.¹¹⁰ Africa seemed to Nasser a continent ripe with opportunities for Egypt to play a significant role.

Many parallels existed between the paternalistic way the imperial powers looked at their colonies and Nasser's thoughts and feelings on Africa and the Arab World. Nasser's words exhibit a particular sense of Egyptian superiority vis-à-vis African peoples. Nasser's mindset was surprisingly similar to imperial thought - not only did he believe there was an opportunity to do good on foreign lands, but there were also inferior peoples to bring civilisation to. The only difference between the imperialism of the colonial powers and Nasser was that the Egyptian

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 53.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 69-70.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 69.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

leader claimed to be defending the African peoples from white colonials rather than from themselves or foreign ideologies. Nasser's paternalistic attitude to Sub-Saharan Africa would later become a sore source of apprehension in his relations with many Black African politicians in 1958 because of the persistent idea in African culture that the Arabs had always looked down upon Black Africans, with some even alluding to the story of Egypt's enslavement of Black Africans to build the pyramids.¹¹¹ Despite his anti-colonial views, Nasser was a new breed of imperialist with dreams of leading Egypt into African affairs. His manifesto also reveals an important factor that would later instil fear into African leaders. Nasser was demonstrating that he was also opportunist. Concluding his manifesto, Nasser claims that his country had been charged with a historical role in the Arab World and Africa at the cusp of a large struggle against imperialism. An opportunity was conferred onto Egypt to become the defender and ally of Africans and Nasser was going to fill it.¹¹² Although he claimed in the *Philosophy* that he had altruistic aims – just as the colonial powers had once had – many leaders on the continent were going to disagree claiming he was exploiting the colonial powers' precarious position in Africa for Egypt's own ends.

A month later, another important piece of writing emerged in the public eye and confirmed Egypt's new anti-colonial posture in foreign affairs. In a book entitled *North Africa in the Past, the Present, and the Future*, Nasser attached a revealing preface. The book's message, supported by Nasser, was that a common Arab community needed to stand together against the Western colonial powers and it urged the North Africans to seize their right to join a struggle to win their independence. Egypt, the book argued, was to be the spiritual guide of the Arab World.¹¹³ Nasser's preface did not mince words: "North Africa is a part of us, just as we are a part of North Africa." Not only should the whole Orient stand united against the West, but all Muslims (as neighbours and brothers) in the Arab World had the duty to help one another in their adversity. All Africans were neighbours and brothers, and therefore Arabs had the duty to find

¹¹¹ W. Scott Thompson conducted many interviews with Ghanaian figures in the 1960s and two, Kojo Botsio (who became Foreign Minister) and T.R. Makonnen (an advisor for Nkrumah) mentioned the memory of Arab paternalism against Sub-Saharan Africans. Makonnen stated that Nkrumah also shared this view of the Arabs. See, W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 8.

¹¹² Ibid, 70.

¹¹³ French diplomats referred to the book in diplomatic cables. See, "N. 1226/AL. Robert Gillet, Chargé d'Affaire a.i., à son Excellence Monsieur Pierre Mendès France, Président du Conseil des Ministres, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Le Caire, le 8 octobre 1954." 353 PO2/102, CADN.

their emancipation and help them find security.¹¹⁴ It is also no coincidence that a few months after the release of Nasser's *Philosophy of the Revolution* Nasser converted the Institute of Sudanese Studies at Cairo University into the Institute of African Studies and Researches in order to assist the state in his new foreign policy venture in Africa. Articles and books on Africa also appeared more and more as Nasser and the country began to be more interested in the continent.¹¹⁵ By 1955, Nasser had prepared his population for a new front of Egypt's foreign policy that stretched beyond North Africa to the rest of the continent to the south.

Ghana, Nkrumah, and Foreign Policy

The case of Ghana's – that is to say Nkrumah's – foreign policy outlook at the dawn of independence differs dramatically from its Senegalese counterpart, and instead shares some commonalities with Nasser's Egypt. In Senegal, foreign policy considerations were affected by a more radically minded generation putting pressure on the regime and diverting much of its attention to domestic affairs. In Ghana, Nkrumah was at the head of the younger and more radical generation who successfully contested colonial rule and won the country's independence. The dominance of Convention People's Party (CPP), after crushing the opposition in the first year of independence, made Nkrumah, just as Nasser was after the Suez Crisis in 1956, the uncontested leader of Ghana and certainly allowed him to craft a foreign policy orientation of his choosing.¹¹⁶ Much like Nasser, however, threats to his rule never completely disappeared despite crushing and co-opting the opposition. This only drove his opponents underground, or worse, made them re-emerge inside the CPP itself. He was surprised several times during his rule by assassination attempts which sometimes influenced his foreign policy.¹¹⁷ Meeting the foreign policy goals he set for the state was therefore crucial to conserve his rule because it would not only maintain his popularity, but also fulfil promises he made to a large portion (70%) of the

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ali Shalash, "African Writing in Arabic Translation: A Bibliography," *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (1981): 521-2.

¹¹⁶ W. Scott Thompson makes a similar judgement, but he overstretches by arguing that Nkrumah was completely free from domestic pressure. The reality was in fact different. See, W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 24.

¹¹⁷ K.B. Asante, who rose to become Nkrumah's right-hand man in African affairs, disclosed in an interview that it was immediately after the August 1962 assassination attempt in Northern Ghana that Nkrumah dramatically altered the country's course in African affairs. Kwaku Bapui Asante (former Ghanaian diplomat under Nkrumah), interviewed by J.R. Lalancette, Accra (Labadi), Ghana, March 2017.

Ghanaian population whom had not been able to vote in the elections of the 1950s.¹¹⁸ Motivated by an ardent zeal for his long-held beliefs in Pan-Africanism, Nkrumah took the country on a project the next six years to the continent in an anti-colonial crusade which took the country to great heights in African affairs.

In March 1957, Ghana found itself in an advantageous situation on the continent, and Nkrumah quickly jumped on the opportunity to make his country punch well above its weight. At first glance Ghana's power potential in African affairs did seem very low at the time because it was a very small country, with a small population, limited resources, albeit a strong economy. Yet in truth it held an amazing potential to become an amazing force in continental affairs because it was the first Sub-Saharan African country to successfully struggle for its independence. Nkrumah understood Ghana's geopolitical limitations and knew exactly how to exploit its unique situation to make Ghana punch above its weight. Other countries would soon follow and become independent, and the eyes of Africans would see Ghana as a role model and seek to follow its example. Nkrumah therefore believed that Ghana needed to quickly make its mark on continental affairs by imposing itself through a discourse on the best course of action for the continent's future. While Nkrumah understood the importance of seizing the opportunity to be the first to get off the mark, his strong personality and diplomatic style harmed his relations with others.

As scholars have correctly argued, Kwame Nkrumah's foreign policy outlook not only dominated his own state's foreign policy, but it also mirrored his personality traits and was moulded by his past experiences.¹¹⁹ For Nkrumah in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Ghana's foreign policy was an intensely personal affair, and he hoped to realise the great Pan-African vision he had had since the late 1940s – to realise some form of unity for Africa which would form a shield against colonialism. Nkrumah's personal handling and oversight of Ghana's foreign affairs was a function of his personality and managerial style. Since his days as a student in the 1930s and 1940s, Nkrumah not only got involved in student and Pan-African politics, but

¹¹⁸ Dennis Austin noted that an incredible portion of the Ghanaian population – 70 per cent – had not been able to vote in the elections in the 1950s, making any claims of the CPP as a mass party spurious. See, Dennis Austin, *Ghana Observed: Essays on the Politics of a West African Republic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), 35.

¹¹⁹ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 5-8, 448, and David Rooney, *Kwame Nkrumah: The Political Kingdom in the Third World* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1988), chapter 15.

always sought to manage and control organisations, and after 1945, the Pan-African movement itself. Nkrumah was influenced heavily by Marxist ideology as a student, and had a particular penchant for Lenin's concept of 'vanguardism' which he applied to his organisations, most prominently his political party, the CPP.¹²⁰ For Nkrumah, political power had to be made most direct and effective to bring about change, and this required it to be wielded by as few people as possible and with the least possible chance of being contested by reactionaries.¹²¹ A good example of his thinking on political action and the desire to be sole leader is the organisation he founded in 1945 called 'The Circle'. After leaving the Fifth Pan-African Congress and returning to London, Nkrumah founded his own organisation called West African National Secretariat (WANS) to promote and bring Pan-Africanism to West Africa and agitate for the right to independence of their nations.¹²² Inside this organisation, Nkrumah created a much smaller and exclusive one called 'The Circle' which was specifically designed to be its vanguard and guide for action. Not only did its members have to declare that they "accept the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah", they also had to swear an oath to obey the directives of its council. The Circle's stated *raison d'être* would also become a constant theme of Nkrumah's foreign policy outlook – to work to bring about "West African unity and the destruction of colonialism." The Circle's end goal, its founding document stated, was to come out at the opportune time "as a political party embracing the whole of West Africa, whose policy then shall be to maintain the Union of African Socialist Republics."¹²³ The Circle's end goal is incredibly revealing and crucial to understand why Nkrumah attempted so often to take the lead on efforts at both forging African unity and fighting colonialism, and finally, that his actual goal was to become the leader of a united Africa. Whilst the goal of other political parties in West Africa had similar aims of trying to forge unity (like the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (RDA) in French West Africa), what made Nkrumah's case different was that he kept to this ideal long after his African counterparts ceased to believe in it in 1960.

¹²⁰ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957), preface, Colin Legum, "Socialism in Ghana: A Political Interpretation," in William Friedland and Carl Rosberg, ed., *African Socialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 132-3, and Dennis Austin, *Ghana Observed*, 38.

¹²¹ Colin Legum, "Socialism in Ghana: A Political Interpretation," 132-3.

¹²² Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957), 54.

¹²³ Nkrumah never hid this at all and proudly included The Circle's founding document in his autobiography, see Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, 303-4.

Nkrumah's vigorous pursuit of foreign affairs, while incredibly important to him later as leader, was never a priority or even much a concern for him from 1945 to early 1957 because he was focused on domestic affairs. The reason lay with the fact that he took his guidance from the debates and resolutions adopted at the Fifth Pan African Congress in Manchester (in which he played a significant role) as he left to pursue his career in politics with the WANS in London and then the Gold Coast in 1947. Nkrumah was a convinced and dedicated Pan-Africanist, but as Dorothy Nelkin argues, the congress ushered a shift in the Pan-African movement away from internationalism to becoming a movement of national independence. Thus, the primary focus was directed inward at the issue of liberating colonial territories and pushing the idea of unity to secondary status.¹²⁴ Nkrumah soon returned to the Gold Coast to be more influential in the struggle for national independence by joining first the United Gold Coast Congress (UGCC) in 1947, and after falling out with other members, establishing his own party, the Convention People's Party (CPP) in 1949. For the next eight years, Nkrumah focused exclusively on running his party, winning elections, and negotiating with the British despite founding the CPP with the explicit goal "to assist and facilitate in any way possible the realisation of a united and self-governing West Africa."¹²⁵ This fact particularly alarmed one of his closest friends and future foreign affairs advisor, George Padmore, as far back as 1954. In a letter from London, Padmore urged Nkrumah to think more about foreign affairs rather than putting all his focus on his political struggles he and the CPP had at home against the opposition and the British. Padmore charged him with for not reading up on international affairs, imploring him to remember that one day he would have "to chart a course for your country, when the responsibility of assuming direction of your foreign policy falls upon your shoulders."¹²⁶

George Padmore kept advising Nkrumah from abroad from 1954-7, and there is ample evidence that after independence Nkrumah drew heavily from his friend's previous advice when he finally set his attention to foreign policy. In August 1955 Padmore felt it was the right time to prepare the Gold Coast to take the lead in the African affairs and advised Nkrumah to begin plans to host a Pan-African conference in the Gold Coast. The conference, he argued, should be

¹²⁴ Dorothy Nelkin, "Socialist Sources of Pan-African Ideology," in William Friedland and Carl Rosberg, ed, *African Socialism*, 69-70.

¹²⁵ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, 101.

¹²⁶ George Padmore, "10th May 1954," Box 154-41 (June Milne Papers), Folder 14, Kwame Nkrumah Papers, Moorland-Springarn Research Center, Howard University, Washington, District of Columbia.

designed along similar lines as Bandung and be a “get-together for a mutual exchange of ideas on political, economic and cultural matters [...] the spirit of co-existence and non-interference should be the policy.” Padmore urged Nkrumah to realise that his party, the CPP, was already beginning to be seen as a role model by other African nationalist parties and this presented an important opportunity for African affairs. Hosting a conference would build even more prestige for Nkrumah who would then possess the influence “to show other African nationalists the correct tactics and strategy.”¹²⁷ Padmore realised that if Nkrumah was the first to pounce on this opportunity, he could become one of the most influential continental political figures and therefore use the position to lead the continent’s future direction. As I will show in chapter three, Nkrumah took Padmore’s advice and on the day of Ghana’s independence, immediately seized the opportunity to take the lead in continental affairs and immediately called for an African conference to be held in Accra. Nkrumah organised many political conferences during his days in the United States and Great Britain, using them as platforms to build influence. In his autobiography, Nkrumah expounded on his role in the Fifth Pan-African Congress, explaining that he was selected to organise the conference, became one of its chairmen, and succeeded in passing a significant resolution.¹²⁸ While this account is triumphalist, it is clear Nkrumah believed he helped to effect a change in the Pan-Africanist movement and this helped boost his confidence. His belief in his capability to affect change at conferences like the conferences of the 1940s was one of his tricks in his arsenal of foreign policy moves and he would return to them often from 1957 to 1963.

In the years before independence, both Padmore and Nkrumah had a vision of Africa and its political limits strikingly at odds with that of Nasser. Seeing it through the lens of race, neither believed that Arabs belonged in the movement. In his August 1955 letter to Nkrumah, Padmore explicitly stated that the basis of Pan-Africanist doctrine was “black nationalism plus socialism.”¹²⁹ Tellingly, Nkrumah’s autobiography does not just adopt a similar understanding of Pan-Africanist; it also makes no mention of North Africans or any attempts to reach out to Arab political leaders and discuss with them African affairs before Ghana’s independence.¹³⁰ Padmore and Nkrumah’s oversight was undoubtedly due to the fact that the roots of Pan-Africanism were

¹²⁷ George Padmore, “August 5 1955,” Box 154-41 (June Milne Papers), Folder 14, Kwame Nkrumah Papers.

¹²⁸ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, 52-3.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, 54.

firmly rooted in the Afro-Caribbean intellectual tradition. Besides, Nkrumah's outlook on unity in this period was restricted to West Africa and this showed his particularly narrow area of interest on the continent.¹³¹ Perhaps, as W. Scott Thompson argued, that Nkrumah found reaching out to the Arabs a tough sell domestically and to his closest followers because many believed the Arabs had always looked down on Black Africans.¹³² In any case, Padmore and Nkrumah were not very interested in the issues facing the wider Arab World, and ignored the ramifications of their push to build a great relationship with Israel around the time of Ghana's independence.¹³³ As I will show in chapter three, these were important oversights because their lack of knowledge and interest in Arab issues caused tensions with some North Africans when Nkrumah brought the two halves of Africa together at the first Conference of Independent African States in April 1958.

The same can be said of his attitude and interest to the issues facing the states and leaders of the ex-AOF. In his autobiography, Nkrumah explains that he was guided by the idea of West African unity. He visited Paris in 1946 to invite the leading African politicians from the French colonial territories to a West African conference he was to host in London to discuss how to implement the idea. Nkrumah met many leading figures and managed to secure the interest of Léopold Senghor to come to the conference to represent the AOF.¹³⁴ There is evidence to suggest that Nkrumah did not make a good impression at all on the Francophone African leaders when he met them. Contacts between them after their initial encounter rarely took place until 1960, and when they did, they ended terribly because Nkrumah tried to impose his stature and ideas on them. Shortly after independence in 1957, the Ghanaian leader visited the Ivory Coast (then a French colony) and attempted to convince its leader, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, to take the Ghanaian experience as gospel and to fight to secede from the French entirely because the Ivorian politician had his vision for his country all wrong. Houphouët-Boigny took exception to Nkrumah's paternalistic message and retorted in public that he predicted Ghana would become

¹³¹ Ibid, 101. W. Scott Thompson also made a similar point that Nkrumah's focus on Pan-Africanism was restricted to Black Africans. See, W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 7.

¹³² Ibid, 8. Both T.R. Makonnen and Kojo Botsio expressed these views about the Arabs, and it is likely they were not alone. Nkrumah did not share this view however, given that he married an Arab woman from Egypt.

¹³³ K.B. Asante revealed to me that Padmore had a great fondness for the Israelis and visited the embassy in Tel Aviv often in the late 1950s to build the Israeli-Ghanaian relationship for Nkrumah. Kwaku Bapru Asante (former Ghanaian diplomat under Nkrumah), interviewed by J.R. Lalancette, Accra (Labadi), Ghana, March 2017. Transcript is available upon request to the author.

¹³⁴ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, 57.

economically weak and isolated within a decade. Both ended the trip sourly on a bet to see which country would be better off in ten years' time.¹³⁵ Nkrumah neither respected nor appreciated the views of his Francophone colleagues, and as this dissertation will show, this severely complicated African affairs and undermined Ghana's position on the continent by 1963.

Another important aspect of Nkrumah's foreign policy is that while he had a professional foreign service to inform and advise him as well as other advisors, all decisions were his alone.¹³⁶ There is evidence that he listened to the advice given to him by his friend and advisor, George Padmore, in the mid-1950s. Padmore believed that a new country in international affairs was threatened with manipulation by other states and that other CPP members could seek to influence the direction of its foreign affairs. Thus, Padmore advised that it was "absolutely necessary that you, and you alone, should guide the country in its orientation as it moves into the bigger sphere of international relations." Total control over the country's foreign affairs needed to be upheld, which meant only trusted, loyal men could be entrusted with diplomatic posts.¹³⁷ Nkrumah heeded his friend's advice, pushing a bill through parliament which stated that all ambassadorial posts were to be determined solely by the party in power (and by extension Nkrumah alone because he held executive power in the CPP), making them political and personal appointments.¹³⁸ Many of these appointments, particularly to the most important countries, were given to loyal friends or family. In the case of his most loyal advisor, Nkrumah originally wanted to place Padmore as foreign minister but was forced to back down after members of his civil service strongly protested because he was a foreigner. Nkrumah thus placed himself as Ghana's first foreign minister (he then chose his close political friend, Kojo Botsio, to replace him a year later), and undeterred, placed Padmore at the head of sensitive projects for Ghana's foreign policy. He was first sent to Israel to create a strong relationship, then advised Nkrumah during important African conferences, and finally managed Ghana's aid efforts to anti-colonial African movements through a state institution he created, the Bureau of African Affairs,

¹³⁵ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, 12.

¹³⁶ Thompson shows in his book that the foreign service was a well-trained one, having been trained in Great Britain in the mid 1950s. He does not however make the point that ultimately, the buck stopped with Nkrumah. See, W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 18-20.

¹³⁷ George Padmore, "24th July 1956", Box 154-41 (June Milne Papers), Folder 14, Kwame Nkrumah Papers.

¹³⁸ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 20.

from 1958 until his death in 1959.¹³⁹ Nkrumah was not always methodical with his handling of foreign affairs, and handed important responsibilities to men he completely trusted, like Padmore. K.B. Asante, who had befriended Padmore on assignment to Israel and later worked to advise Nkrumah on African affairs, was handed the difficult responsibility of implementing the Casablanca Conference resolutions of January 1961.¹⁴⁰

There are quite a few constants in Nkrumah's foreign policy from 1957-63, but none more important than the goal of spearheading some form of unity on the continent. At first his vision of unity was limited to West Africa, but he later extended it in the early 1960s to cover the whole continent as he grew bolder. The goal of unity was a question of strategy for Nkrumah, and it was a means to an end. In his first official state trip abroad as the Gold Coast's Prime Minister in 1953, Nkrumah visited Liberia and gave an address at a well-attended party at President William Tubman's residence. In his speech, entitled 'The Vision that I See', Nkrumah spelled out his state's future foreign policy direction after independence. Nkrumah stated that "the campaign for a United West Africa had begun and that all the various territories on the West Coast of Africa should now think in terms of unity and solidarity with one another" because he believed that it was only by coming together as one that they could hold enough leverage to build equal respect on the world stage.¹⁴¹ This speech reveals one of the aspects of Nkrumah's thought on post-colonial international relations. Achieving unity between African nations was required if they were to upset the disadvantageous power relations with the wider world that they had chronically suffered from. Not only could unity give the Africans the power to demand respect from abroad, but Nkrumah insisted it could also be the greatest tool in their arsenal to defeat colonialism. Perhaps most important for the future of African affairs, Nkrumah showed that he was insensitive to other states' foreign policies by boasting his own 'true' vision. Given the position he would reveal a few years later, William Tubman was taken by surprise that Nkrumah came to his country and boasted of the coming of West African unity.

Nkrumah did not have an unmitigated hatred and desire to vanquish his former colonial power. He openly expressed a great fondness for Great Britain and its people after living there in

¹³⁹ Kwaku Bapruai Asante (former Ghanaian diplomat under Nkrumah), interviewed by J.R. Lalancette, Accra (Labadi), Ghana, March 2017.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, 187.

the 1940s, he loved being courted by the Royalty, and even employed many British expatriates as close advisors and even as chief of staff of the armed forces.¹⁴² Unlike Nasser, Nkrumah never suffered a devastating military attack by former colonial powers, and this surely helped conserve a certain level of fondness for Great Britain. What Nkrumah resented from the colonial countries and what he dedicated himself to destroy over the first six years of Ghana's independence was colonialism – which he defined as “the policy by which a foreign power binds territories to herself by political ties with the primary object of promoting her own economic advantage.”¹⁴³ Nkrumah saw the colonial relationship as exploitative and asymmetric because neither side recognised nor respected the other as an equal. It was a historic wrong that needed to be corrected, and according to his own analysis of colonialism he had to find a way to smash the exploitative ‘political ties’ linking African territories to colonial powers. This would allow the colonial territories to find their own governance and independence through which they would end their disadvantageous economic relations and gain the respect of other states as equals. Nkrumah saw the idea of unity between independent states as an important step towards freeing the African economies and even as a method to build a competitive and independent economic sphere in Africa. It was this mindset that led Nkrumah to judge and accuse many other African states who decided to partner with their former metropolises, particularly the states of the former AOF, as reactionaries and enemies of Africa because they sought to perpetrate colonialism because of their links to their former colonial power. Foremost on his mind was the liberation of the Gold Coast of colonialism, but he also saw further in the future. For Nkrumah, the threat of colonialism did not end at the Gold Coast's independence because he believed that only when it was banished completely from the whole continent could a true independence be achieved for the Gold Coast and all other African nations.¹⁴⁴ This was to be his main calling and a major theme of his foreign policy throughout the first six years of Ghana's independence.

¹⁴² W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 25.

¹⁴³ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, vii.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, x. Note that the preface of his autobiography was written before in 1956 and before Ghana's independence.

Chapter II: Ghana and Egypt's Continental Rivalry, 1957-1958

At the independence celebrations of Ghana in March 1957, a jubilant Kwame Nkrumah met briefly with other African leaders for the first time as Ghana's first Prime Minister. He publicly launched a novel idea which amidst the exuberance was easy to dismiss as far-fetched: the possibility of quickly hosting the first-ever conference between leaders of independent African states. The next few months, however, revealed that Nkrumah was serious and determined to carry it out despite an initial flurry of competitive bids to hold it elsewhere on the continent. Habib Bourguiba, arriving first to Accra, was the first to suggest to Nkrumah that he should hold the conference in Tunis.¹⁴⁵ The Moroccan delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Ahmed Balafrej, quickly made a bid to the Ghanaian leader behind closed doors and tried to convince him to hold the conference in Morocco instead. According to diplomatic sources, there were noises from even further afield of another African state trying to stake its claim. The Egyptians, who were not attending the celebrations in Accra because of a suspicious lack of invitation by Nkrumah, were trying to make the claim that such a conference should be held in Cairo.¹⁴⁶ The rush of bids by the leaders of African states to hold the first inter-governmental African conference demonstrates that each recognised the historic significance of holding this event in their own capital. Each understood that it could be an excellent opportunity to boost their popularity and their status in African affairs.

Nkrumah, however, was prepared not to give way and was the most determined to bring the independent nations to Accra. After all, Nkrumah saw the opportunity as a logical progression of previous conferences he had attended abroad in the 1940s and 50s where African personalities met to discuss the state of colonialism and the ways to bring about its demise. He

¹⁴⁵ "4225. No. d'ordre 760. Londres, le 27 mars 1957. Le Marquis du Parc Locmaria, Ambassadeur de Belgique à Londres, à Monsieur P.H. Spaak, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères." NA 14727-A. Archive Diplomatique, Service des Archives, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Commerce Extérieur, Brussels.

¹⁴⁶ "N. 6142 – P.9, N. d'ordre; 2020. Paris, le 19 avril 1957. Le Baron J. Guillaume, Ambassadeur de Belgique en France, à Monsieur P.-H. Spaak, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à Bruxelles." NA 14727-A. Archive Diplomatique, Service des Archives, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Commerce Extérieur, Brussels. The Egyptian government had not received an invitation by Nkrumah to come to the independence celebrations in Accra because of the flimsy reason that the invitations were sent through the British Government who at the time had no relations with Egypt because of the fallout of the Suez War. This chapter will show that it is more likely that Nkrumah anticipated a coming rivalry and trouble by the Egyptians, and therefore never extended an invitation.

quickly sent follow up letters the next month to pre-empt the others, and the invitations were sent that summer to the other independent African states to meet for a preparatory meeting. Officials of the Ghanaian, Sudanese, Liberian, Tunisian, Ethiopian, Libyan, and Moroccan governments met for the first time at the Sudanese Embassy in London on 15 August. This meeting was not only significant because it was the first of many which organised the first conference between African heads of state eight months later, but especially for its glaring omission.¹⁴⁷ This was brought up at the first meeting, and it must have seemed curious to the officials involved that this upcoming conference was meant to be a meeting between all independent African states yet Egypt was not present. One reason, and the only one given by the acting Ghanaian High Commissioner at the meeting, was the fact that Egypt no longer had diplomatic representation in London as relations were cut with Britain during the Suez War.¹⁴⁸ The acting High Commissioner did tell the others that he would send Egypt reports of preliminary meetings through the Indian High Commission, but this deliberately obfuscated Ghana's strategy for the upcoming African conference.

Despite pledging to keep Nasser informed and included, Nkrumah was duplicitous because he had already put his strategy in motion. Nkrumah was extremely suspicious of Nasser's motives in Africa, and at once jealous and fearful of his status on the continent as one of the great leaders at Bandung and as the 'victor' over the colonial powers at Suez. It was impossible to keep Nasser out of African affairs for very long, yet Nkrumah purposely kept Egypt out of the first preliminary meeting for the African conference because he wanted to control the discourse of the first conference and its agenda. At Bandung, Nasser, as the largest leader of the few official delegations from Africa (Liberia, Libya, and Ethiopia participated), had assumed the voice for Africa and via the resolutions, associated the whole continent with the rest of the developing world. With the budding Afro-Asian solidarity movement, Nasser was focusing his efforts to become its leader and merge the African continent with Asia. Nkrumah was trying to keep Egypt's influence to a minimum for three reasons: Nkrumah wanted a spotlight for himself on the new African stage for both domestic and continental ambitions;

¹⁴⁷ "Approved Minutes of First Meeting of Heads of Missions in the Sudan Embassy on 15th August, 1957," in Conference of Independent African States – 1958. I. Micr. Afr. 573. Bodleian Library, Oxford. South Africa had been invited to this meeting too, but essentially excluded itself from it by requesting that the colonial powers should also be invited.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 680.

starting at Bandung and the AAPSO, Nasser was gunning hard to be the forerunner on controlling the voice of Africa for the same purposes; and finally, Nkrumah knew that if Nasser were to control any agenda, he would bring about issues which would harm Ghana's newfound relationship with Israel.

Egyptian-Ghanaian relations until late in 1958 were described in the media at the time as a rivalry, yet in the historiography this rivalry is described as "alleged." According to this thesis, the rivalry did not exactly exist because Nkrumah and Nasser were never far apart on large international issues nor did they have any particularly conflicting foreign policies.¹⁴⁹ While the two did begin to get closer from late 1958 to 1959, and indeed came to understand that they stood closer on many incredibly important issues than they had originally thought, their early relations did suffer from a rivalry marred by mutual suspicion and competition. The crux of their rivalry was a symptom of the continent's ongoing post-colonial political struggle – the apprehension and misunderstandings of two parts above and below the Sahara as they strove to join up as they had before colonialism. On the one hand Nkrumah, a dedicated pan-Africanist, was determined to keep Africa's decolonisation and its politics contained within Africa's continental limits, and on the other Nasser believed the decolonisation of Africa was part of a much larger worldwide phenomenon in which African states should play an effective role in a much larger anticolonial struggle. It has also been written that a major cause of friction between the two was Nkrumah's close relationship with Israel. While Nasser was undoubtedly concerned seeing the Israelis rapidly make ground in Ghana, not once did he try to defame, shame, or blackmail Nkrumah for siding with the Israeli 'imperialists.' Besides, the Ghanaian-Israeli relationship, while mutually beneficial in 1957 and 1958, soon fell out of importance for Nkrumah.¹⁵⁰ The Ghanaian-Israeli relationship was nothing more than a minor nuisance.

What instead stoked the fires of the rivalry was the confrontation of two different grand strategies waged by two aspiring postcolonial leaders. Gamal Abdel Nasser wanted to build on his stature as a key Afro-Asian figure by continuing the 'spirit of Bandung' and bringing the new African states into the Afro-Asian fold. Kwame Nkrumah, on the other hand, saw Nasser as a potential nuisance in African affairs because of his rising popularity and the fact that he had his

¹⁴⁹ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 50.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 46-50.

fingers in many geopolitical pies – the Middle East, the Afro-Asian sphere, the Cold War, and stood to firmly place another in Africa proper. For Nkrumah, the African continent should stand alone and make its proper mark in the world and could not afford to be being dragged into other geopolitical spheres. The problem, therefore, was that both leaders pictured their role on the continent to be the leading one. This rivalry erupted in the open during winter and spring of 1958 at two rival conferences, the Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference in Cairo and the first Conference of Independent African States (IAS) in Accra. This rivalry, whilst limited to Nasser and Nkrumah, was nevertheless emblematic of the positions taken by the North African and the Sub-Saharan African states. As the first conference uniting free African leaders showed in Accra in April 1958, a major fault line emerged over the North African states' Arab identity. The Arab leaders exhibited solidarity over the much-discussed principles of Bandung and the issue of Palestine yet found it difficult to understand why the Sub-Saharan African states would not back them. For leaders like Mohammed V and Habib Bourguiba it made sense to discuss the Palestine Question at the conference because of the number of Arab states attending. A deep sense of kinship was evident in the Arab leaders, and they attached a deep sense of importance to Arab affairs, even if an issue was actually located on the African continent. Yet for leaders like Kwame Nkrumah and Liberia's William Tubman, they did not want to discuss at length and pass a resolution they considered a Middle Eastern problem because the conference was designed for African affairs. Thus, a differing conception of what was and should be part of Africa or 'African' was hotly debated, and it took many African delegations at the conference by surprise because they assumed all parties were on the same page. Part of the question behind the fault line was whether or not Africa was poised to stand tall by itself during this process of decolonisation or if it was merely a small part of a much bigger geopolitical whole facing the anti-colonial struggle. The first Conference of Independent African States was a crucial step in reconciling the Saharan divide imposed by the colonial powers because it helped to resolve the issue of the North African states' Arab identity and the building of a shared African identity.

Nasser Enters African Affairs: The Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference

In the context of the Middle East, the Soviet Union and Egypt had developed a working relationship since 1955. Hoping to gain a foothold in the region, the Soviet leadership granted steady supplies of arms to the Egyptian army and also given technical and financial aid for the

Aswan Dam project. This aid was very beneficial for Nasser because it secured his new regime and freed him to wage a foreign policy – for one, Soviet arms would placate his demanding and unruly army, while the Aswan Dam project had the potential to help Egypt’s agricultural sector and development plan.¹⁵¹ The Soviet Union also had its eyes on the African continent because of the loosening grip of the colonial powers. More and more countries were becoming independent, and the Soviet Union wanted to develop new and beneficial relationships to grow their influence.¹⁵² Nasser’s stock had risen in the Afro-Asian world since 1955 because of his attendance at the Bandung Conference and then his ‘victory’ over the colonial powers in the Suez War in 1956, which attracted many anti-colonial figures from all over Africa to come to Cairo. For his next foreign policy move and just as the Soviet Union, he aimed to act on his words from his *Philosophy of the Revolution* and grow Egypt’s influence in Africa.

Gamal Abdel Nasser gained a good reputation both at home and abroad at the Bandung conference in 1955, and it was a seminal moment for him.¹⁵³ Not only was it his first trip abroad as Egypt’s leader (therefore signalling his regime’s solid hold on power), but he met other leaders who, like himself, took a stand against colonialism and it put him in the international spotlight.¹⁵⁴ Given that Bandung was heavily publicized throughout the world, it allowed the rest of the developing world to see him for the first time and demonstrated to the Egyptians that their new leader was important on the international stage. Bandung did a lot for his image and prestige as an anticolonial figure, but perhaps his crowning achievement at Bandung is that he managed to wrest some time and attention on two key issues of Egypt’s foreign policy – the colonial war in Algeria, and the unsolved Question of Palestine.¹⁵⁵ Among the leaders who attended the Bandung Conference, Nasser was the most keen to hold another conference to continue the ‘Spirit of Bandung’ to build on his success there and the Egyptian Government raised the question of holding another conference several times in 1956-7. India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon,

¹⁵¹ Douglas Little, “The Cold War in the Middle East: Suez Crisis to Camp David Accords,” in Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume II: Crises and Détente* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 307.

¹⁵² Alessandro Iandolo, “Imbalance of Power: The Soviet Union and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1961,” in *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Spring 2014): 33-36.

¹⁵³ Lorenz Luthi, *Cold Wars: Asia, the Middle East, Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 267.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 267, 292.

¹⁵⁵ “Final Communiqué of the Asian-African conference of Bandung (24 April 1955),” Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l’Europe (CVCE), accessed 17 November 2018, http://franke.uchicago.edu/Final_Communique_Bandung_1955.pdf

and Indonesia were tasked by the conference to organise a second, but due to disputes over future Soviet and Israeli participation, the refusal of Baghdad and SEATO pact countries to attend, and the fear of the conference becoming an Arab-Nationalist platform if held in the Middle East, the project floundered and many countries lost interest.¹⁵⁶ Throughout 1956 and 1957, the most ardent supporters of holding another conference were Egypt, the People's Republic of China (PRC), and the Soviet Union, the latter of which was desperately trying to get closer to the Afro-Asian countries to compete with the PRC, which had been present at Bandung.¹⁵⁷ As a result of several meetings between Egyptian, Soviet, Chinese, and Japanese Communist figures in the Soviet Union, India, and Egypt in December 1956, Nasser authorised the holding of an Afro-Asian conference in Cairo in the fall of 1957.¹⁵⁸

The context of the timing of this conference is important should not be shrugged off as a coincidence because it came so closely *before* Nkrumah's conference of Independent African States. The Ghanaian leader's quick strides to get the conference going, coupled with his attempt to keep Cairo in the dark was interpreted by Nasser as the rise of a challenger for supremacy in African affairs. Nasser knew that his position in the lead of Africa's race was tentative; adopting Africa's voice at Bandung was not enough to secure victory. Worst of all, should Nkrumah's conference limit its focus to the continent of Africa, his strategy of expanding the resolutions of Bandung and the appeal of the Afro-Asian sphere would be stunted. Nasser needed to act quickly and decisively on the African front, and he did so in two ways. First, he rushed the planning and invitations of his own conference and second, he would rally the Arab states behind him and undermine Nkrumah. At the 28th session of the Arab League in November, Nasser got a few special recommendations passed by its council in a "bundle entitled "Tightening of the links between Arabs in the countries of the African continent." The political committee of the Arab League therefore recommended to every member of the League to generalise their diplomatic relations in the Arab-African countries, to install Arab League bureaus in them, and finally to

¹⁵⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, CIA-RDP78-00915R000700140014-4 "The Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference, Cairo, Egypt – 26 December 1957 – 1 January 1958," 1-2, accessed 12 January 2019, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP78-00915R000700140014-4.pdf>

¹⁵⁷ The Soviet Union was kept from being represented at the Bandung Conference but admitted to a body closely associated with conference, the Committee for Asian Solidarity, just after Bandung in 1955. See, "Monsieur Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à Messieurs les Agents diplomatiques et consulaires. Bruxelles, le 11 février 1958." AE/II/22 (2912) Archives Africaines, Royaume de Belgique, Affaires Étrangères, Commerce Extérieur et Coopération au Développement, Brussels, 25.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 3-5.

organise better links between them and the Afro-Asian states.¹⁵⁹ Nasser was arguably the most powerful figure in the Arab League at the time and this move was meant to bring the Arab-African states closer together and to the Afro-Asian states. Doing so would enable Nasser to go to Nkrumah's conference and support him while he steered its African agenda under the umbrella of the Afro-Asian group.

In the course of the spring and summer of 1957, Nasser extended invitations to the other Bandung states and offered to pay for transport and lodgings for the attendees.¹⁶⁰ His hopes of being the host of the 'second Bandung Conference' were dashed, however, because many of the states refused to send official delegations from their governments or recognise a delegation from their country.¹⁶¹ According to Belgian intelligence sources, only eleven states could be considered as having either organised or approved to allow a delegation to take part in the conference which included a mixed bag of Communist states (the PRC, North Korea, and the USSR) and some African states (Ghana, Ethiopia and Egypt). This meant that Nasser's conference in Cairo was going to be different than the one in Bandung because it would not be held at an inter-governmental level. Undeterred, he designed it as a "conference for Afro-Asian peoples" which welcomed all delegations from the Afro-Asian world and as a result, the conference had various unofficial delegations coming from more countries to Cairo (45) than ever went to Bandung (29).¹⁶² Gamal Abdel Nasser understood that beating Nkrumah to the punch at hosting a conference on African soil was an opportunity to promote Egypt's agenda and also influence the tone and discourse of future continental conferences, thus building more exposure and prestige for himself and for Egypt. To do so, however, he needed to ensure its complete domination before deliberations even started in order to make it impossible for any

¹⁵⁹ "N. 3826 / 7. N. d'ordre: 1020. Le Caire, le 16 décembre 1957. Monsieur Jacques Deschamps, Chargé d'Affaires a.i. de Belgique, à Monsieur Victor Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à Bruxelles." NA 14.763. Belgian Diplomatic Archives.

¹⁶⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, CIA-RDP78-00915R000700140014-4 "The Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference, Cairo, Egypt – 26 December 1957 – 1 January 1958," 8.

¹⁶¹ The most important of these was India's refusal to attend and to distance itself entirely from the project, which in the aftermath referred to the conference as "the Cairo Circus", and Tunisia, who opposed the anti-Western stance the conference was to take. See, "Monsieur Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à Messieurs les Agents diplomatiques et consulaires. Bruxelles, le 11 février 1958." AE/II/22 (2912), Archives Africaines, Brussels, p.21, and "D. P.27 – N. 321.N. d'ordre: 107. Monsieur E. Vanderborght, Consul Général de Belgique à Alger, à M. V. Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à Bruxelles." 14.764.I. Archive Diplomatique, Service des Archives, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Commerce Extérieur, Brussels.

¹⁶² Nasser was intent to stretch the truth by stating that the coming delegations were representing countries when in reality they did not. See, *ibid*, 2-3.

other figure to have too much influence on the outcome. As the preparatory commission met in October, the Egyptian Government began to frame the tone and discourse which would characterise the conference. Public cables were sent by the commission to the United Nations urging Dag Hammarskjöld to intervene in the Algerian War. Media coverage in Cairo also began a propaganda campaign in which it insisted that the coming conference would be affirm the Afro-Asian opinion as it had been manifested at Bandung, as well as promoting the advantages of adopting a policy of positive-neutralism, and urging others to take on the call of the struggle against imperialism.¹⁶³ A month before the conference Nasser ramped up the propaganda a notch, and the Egyptian Government declared the second week of December a special propaganda week. It featured particularly vitriolic news editorials and radio broadcasts attacking Western imperialism and much praise was given to the Afro-Asian Bloc.¹⁶⁴ Unsurprisingly, due to these efforts and the election at the preparatory meeting of Anwar al Sadat and Yusuf al Sibai as chairman and secretary general of the conference, the conference's resolutions were decided in advance and designed to serve Egypt's national interest.¹⁶⁵

As a result of the lack of interest by many of the original states who had supported and organised the original Bandung Conference (key of which was Nehru's decision to snub the effort altogether), Nasser suddenly became the inheritor of the Afro-Asian mantle.¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, since he was hosting the conference on home soil it was a golden opportunity to use it as a platform to promote items on his own agenda and put the international issues he cared about under the spotlight. In this respect Nasser achieved some measure of success because the colonial war in Algeria was discussed in its own item on the agenda. Nasser also managed to get the conference to recognise the Bandung principles before passing two important resolutions to stand out from the rest. Resolutions five and six give the Egyptian stand on the issues of Algeria

¹⁶³ "N. 3214 / 7. N. d'ordre: 908. Le Caire, le 26 octobre 1957. Monsieur Jacques Deschamps, Chargé d'Affaires de Belgique a.i., à Monsieur Victor Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à Bruxelles." 14.764.I. Archive Diplomatique, Service des Archives, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Commerce Extérieur, Brussels.

¹⁶⁴ "N. 3768 / 7. N. d'ordre: 1008. Le Caire, le 9 décembre 1957. Monsieur Jacques Deschamps, Chargé d'Affaires de Belgique a.i., à Monsieur Victor Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à Bruxelles." 14.764.I. Archive Diplomatique, Service des Archives, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Commerce Extérieur, Brussels.

¹⁶⁵ "N. 3214 / 7. N. d'ordre: 908. Le Caire, le 26 octobre 1957. Monsieur Jacques Deschamps, Chargé d'Affaires de Belgique a.i., à Monsieur Victor Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à Bruxelles." 14.764.I.

¹⁶⁶ Nehru dealt the crippling blow to the idea of a 'Second Bandung' when he declared the idea unnecessary. "N. 3059/7. N. d'ordre:855. Le Caire, le 1er octobre 1957. Monsieur Jacques Deschamps, Chargé d'Affaires de Belgique a.i., à Monsieur Victor Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à Bruxelles." NA 16.472. Archive Diplomatique, Service des Archives, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Commerce Extérieur, Brussels.

and Palestine. Thus, the conference agreed that the French were waging a colonial war of extermination against the Algerian people, that the Algerians had the right to independence and sovereignty and demanded that the French government cease its actions and give independence to the Algerians. As for Palestine, the conference declared that Israel was “a base of imperialism which threatens the progress and security of the Middle East” and supported the right of return of the Palestinian people to their homeland.¹⁶⁷ These resolutions perfectly echoed Egypt’s stand on its most important issues, and other resolutions helped set a language, a tone, as well as a list of issues and recommendations that would re-appear at other conferences. These included: the backing of the Bandung principles as the only just basis of international relations, the condemnation of imperialism as a tactic to undermine national governments and the sovereignty of the new states, the call for all colonial powers to hand over independence to their territories immediately, the duty of Afro-Asian people to unite and assist others in their struggle for independence with any means possible, a call for the unjust end of racial discrimination as tool to subjugate peoples, the need to for economic and technical cooperation, as well as the need for more cultural and social exchanges to allow former colonial peoples to get to know one another.¹⁶⁸

A key strategy was wielded by Sadat and Sibai to make the resolutions the gold standard for the following conferences – they did so by crafting and wording the resolutions in a way to adopt a much wider voice than the mere groups attending the conference. The tactic of adopting the voice of a larger whole was not new, as Nasser had done it before at Bandung when he claimed to speak for the whole of Africa. Thus, resolutions from the conference claimed to be from the entirety of the ‘Afro-Asian Peoples’ to give them more weight and the allure of righteousness.¹⁶⁹ The general tone and language evident in the resolutions was also very vitriolic and calculated to dispel any notion that the colonial powers were potential partners for Africa’s future. Reeling from the Suez War, Egypt lost all trust in France and Great Britain and was engaged in low intensity conflict with them to loosen their grip on their colonial territories. Nasser wanted others to join him in the same venture to reel back colonial power because it

¹⁶⁷ *Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Conference, Cairo, December 26, 1957 – January 1, 1958* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958), 234-6, 237.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 217-263.

¹⁶⁹ Examples of which are “We Afro-Asian peoples who met in Cairo...”, “The Afro-Asian peoples desire for...”, etc. See, *ibid*, 217-9.

would create a vacuum for him to fill. Thus, the resolutions condemned the colonial powers are referred to as “tyrant imperialists” and charge them of the ultimate sin - deliberately dividing and ruining the peoples they ruled for their own benefit.¹⁷⁰ This point is particularly important for two reasons – for one, the question of whether or not the colonial powers could be trusted as partners would divide the continent into two blocs of African states from 1960 to 1962. Second, this message had an incredible resonance with the younger, up-and-coming generation of political leaders present in many African states. Wielding this message had the potential and would later be used to empower the younger political opposition to undermine the established generation of politicians who chose to keep their relationships with the colonial powers.

The Cairo conference represented more to Nasser than the chance to spread Egypt’s agenda and ideas, to monopolise the discourse of Africa’s decolonisation, and to set a precedent for future conferences. Nasser’s stand against the colonial powers had attracted anti-colonial figures in the recent past and he wanted to make Cairo the epicentre of Africa’s struggle against colonialism. Thus, an important goal for Nasser was reached at the conference by establishing a permanent body in Cairo headed by an Egyptian (which would go on to become the Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Organization, or AAPSO) tasked with carrying out the resolutions and help disseminate information.¹⁷¹ This permanent secretariat, headed by Yusuf al Sibai, was the nucleus of Nasser’s plan to turn Cairo into a base for fighting anti-colonialism on the continent and to attract more anticolonial figures to the Egyptian capital. To make Cairo the visible bastion of anti-colonialism, he had to make good on Egypt’s promise to fulfil its obligations to the resolutions (as well as encourage the others to join). To this end, Nasser ordered to begin beaming anticolonial propaganda aimed at the African interior in a few African languages, and shortly after the conference the powerful station at Mansourah was put to work with a new program called *The Voice of Free Africa*.¹⁷² It was not long until this new propaganda tool reached its intended effect. In February 1958 with the colonial powers alarmed, the Belgian

¹⁷⁰ The resolution entitled “On Economic and Technical Cooperation” is particularly evocative. See, *ibid*, 238-9.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, 217.

¹⁷² These programs and Cairo’s propaganda deeply worried the Belgian and British governments because the anticolonial message could reach areas where movements were not active. “P.1-2/1-72. Le 8 janvier, 1958. Le Comte Ph. De Liedekerke, Consul Général de Belgique, à Monsieur V. Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, Bruxelles.” AF-I-57. Archives Africaines, Brussels.

Government put its national radio institute to work on a project to scramble Cairo's transmissions without preventing the European radio signals from getting into Africa.¹⁷³

On paper, Nasser's conference was a success for Egypt, but his attempt to constrain the dialogue and direction during the proceedings utterly failed. This conference was designed to be Egypt's show, but the Soviet Union had other ideas. Given that this conference was the Soviet Union's first foray into Afro-Asian affairs, it is unsurprising that its delegation made a big splash. Many observers noted that the Soviet delegation, headed by the President of the International Institute of Economic Sciences at Moscow, A. A. Arzumanyan, was incredibly active in all the proceedings and that its work was widely publicised in the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁴ Causing the biggest stir at the conference and among Western observers, however, was the Soviet Union's position on its future aid to Afro-Asian states: "The Soviet Union holds that the underdeveloped countries are entitled to assistance without any conditions – military or political, economic or social – that is to say, such assistance should be rendered in conformity with the Bandung principles."¹⁷⁵ Apart from the veiled offer of aid to the Afro-Asian states, the Soviet delegation took up too much room in the proceedings by trying to dominate them. According to a source close to the Belgian Ambassador in Cairo, the Egyptian leader was very displeased by the unexpected turn the conference took towards communism, and the conference's president, Anwar Sadat was even held responsible for losing control of the conference.¹⁷⁶ According to the Portuguese observers at the conference in Cairo, Egyptian politicians, both during and after the conference, scrambled to dispel the general impression that the conference was a tool to spread communism.¹⁷⁷ More signs came out shortly after the conference of Egypt's displeasure with the USSR and of the two governments' different views of the conference, particularly in the press. In Egypt, the newspaper tasked with covering the conference neglected to mention the USSR's active role at the conference and gave a completely different account than the ones given in

¹⁷³ "Institut National de Radiodiffusion. Ref. Dir. Et.-MG/maw. Bruxelles le 15 février 1958. Monsieur Ros, Chef de Cabinet de Monsieur le Ministre des Communications. Objet: Utilisation de fréquences ondes courtes." AF-I-57. Archives Africaines, Brussels.

¹⁷⁴ "Monsieur Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à Messieurs les Agents diplomatiques et consulaires. Bruxelles, le 11 février 1958." AE/II/22 (2912), 1, 20. Archives Africaines, Brussels.

¹⁷⁵ *Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference, Cairo, December 26, 1957 – January 1, 1958*, 183-4.

¹⁷⁶ "N. 3987 / 7. Télégramme par courrier N. 146. Le Caire, le 30 décembre 1957." 14.764.I, Archives Diplomatiques Belges.

¹⁷⁷ "NATO Confidential Working Paper AC/119-WP(58)2/1. 4th February, 1958. Committee of Political Advisors, Afro-Asian Solidarity Congress: Note by the Portuguese Delegation." 14.764.I, Archives Diplomatiques Belges.

Izvestiya and *Pravda*.¹⁷⁸ The official post-conference account destined for the Afro-Asian countries was published in Moscow and included a propaganda piece masquerading as a preface meant to entice the Afro-Asian countries to nurture ties with the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁹ Worse for the Egyptian Government, however, was that all the fanfare they raised about the conference never reached the intended effect among Egypt's population as reactions were apathetic.¹⁸⁰ Egypt's failure to contain the Soviet Union at the conference was the reason why Nasser turned his eye to hijack and dominate the upcoming conference in Accra.

Interestingly, the Ghanaian Government did send an official delegation to Nasser's Conference upon his invitation, and observers at the time noted that Nkrumah did so because he wanted to ensure Egypt's attendance in Accra the following spring.¹⁸¹ There were undoubtedly another reason for Ghana's official attendance there, as Nkrumah surely wanted to gather first-hand information on Egypt's behaviour at the conference to warn him of any potential pitfalls at his own conference. Although there are no available verbatim accounts of the conference and despite the measures used by the organisers to keep disagreements from reaching the public, one of the most notable events at the conference involved the Ghanaian delegation and leaked out to Western officials. The Ghanaian delegation interrupted the proceedings to level a declaration in protest of the Soviet Union's intervention in Hungary in the fall of 1956.¹⁸² Since word of this protest leaked out, it probably caused quite an uproar in the conference (not to mention insulting the Soviet delegation) and surely caused embarrassment to the Egyptians.

Planning the First Conference of Independent African States

In the first preliminary meeting, the acting Ghanaian High Commissioner wasted no time and established the general substance, goal, and limits of the first conference of African states. To Nkrumah, this conference's aim would form the first steps to a post-colonial Africa and repair

¹⁷⁸ "Monsieur Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à Messieurs les Agents diplomatiques et consulaires. Bruxelles, le 11 février 1958." AE/II/22 (2912), Archives Africaines, Brussels.

¹⁷⁹ The preface was written post-conference by Sharaf Rashidov and gave a glowing view of the Soviet Union and its altruism towards the Afro-Asian states. See "Great Assembly of Eastern Peoples," in *Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference, Cairo, December 26, 1957 – January 1, 1958*.

¹⁸⁰ "Bruxelles, le 11 février 1958. Monsieur Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à Messieurs les Agents diplomatiques et consulaires." 14.764.I, Archives Diplomatiques Belges.

¹⁸¹ "Monsieur Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à Messieurs les Agents diplomatiques et consulaires. Bruxelles, le 11 février 1958," 4.

¹⁸² Ibid.

the bonds and connections between African peoples ruptured by the colonial powers. Thus, first and foremost, the acting High Commissioner proposed that it should be a forum in which the governments of independent states of Africa could congregate, get to know one another, and exchange political views.¹⁸³ Although it did not explicitly say so to the others, to prevent Egypt from stealing the show at the conference, the Ghanaian government asked to limit the attendance to heads of state or foreign ministers of independent African states. Observers from territories under colonial rule, many of whom were in exile in Cairo, would not be allowed to attend.¹⁸⁴ This would then allow more spotlight on Ghana at the conference, but also prevent Egypt from using more voices to echo Nasser's agenda. This meeting adjourned until Ghana could propose a general agenda for the conference, and Egypt be notified of what had transpired.¹⁸⁵ The minutes of the second meeting, which took place in the Ethiopian Embassy on 8 November, gives evidence that Egypt was not pleased to have not been consulted about this conference and seemingly found itself on the back foot. Egypt, through a note given to and read out by the Ghanaian government, requested that it be part of the organisation of the conference and suggested that a meeting of officials take place in Cairo or Khartoum to lay the groundwork for the conference.¹⁸⁶ Nasser clearly hoped that he could manage to shape the coming conference at the last minute in his own backyard. This was immediately nixed by the Ghanaian acting High Commissioner as Egypt's proposal may or may not be needed, and he later suggested (with the other attendees agreeing) that officials would instead meet in Accra weeks before the conference in order to help the Secretary General with the final preparations of the conference.¹⁸⁷ The meeting adjourned after Ghana's promise to draw up a proper agenda proposal, and after all parties had agreed to push back the January 1958 official date of the conference in Accra because it coincided with Sudan's elections.¹⁸⁸

The heads of missions in London met a further three times, in November 1957, February and April 1958 and discussed the agenda for the upcoming conference as well as other issues. At

¹⁸³ "Approved Minutes of First Meeting of Heads of Missions in the Sudan Embassy on 15th August, 1957," 677.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 678-9. The acting High Commissioner gave the convenient excuse that due to colonial realities, it would have been too difficult to bring together all resistance figures in Africa.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 681.

¹⁸⁶ "Approved Minutes of Second Meeting of Heads of Missions in the Ethiopian Embassy on 8th November, 1957," in *Conference of Independent African States – 1958. I. Micr. Afr. 573. Bodleian Library, Oxford*, 684-5.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 684-5, 688.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 689-90.

these meetings, Egypt was never brought up, nor was it recorded that any of the attendees had sought to reach out to the Egyptian government for input.¹⁸⁹ Perhaps this was due to the fact that in December, Nasser had held and directed his own anti-colonial conference which formed the groundwork for the Egypt-based Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO). Nasser had shown his cards at this conference, and all African leaders were now aware that African affairs were subsumed within an Afro-Asian framework, and that Nasser had a penchant for wanting to focus most of the attention on Arab issues. Some of the independent African states also had recent troubles with Egypt, particularly because Nasser had meddled in their affairs, which could also explain why Tunisia, Libya, and Sudan did not help Egypt's cause at the meetings. None profited more from the fact that Nasser had no way of attending the meetings in London than Nkrumah, since he got to propose, negotiate, and settle the agenda for the conference without his interference. Egypt aside, these preliminary meetings were important for other reasons which had repercussions for the future development of inter-African affairs.

The first point raised on Nkrumah's agenda for the conference was a discussion regarding the problem of "subversive acts" on the African continent. The Liberian ambassador in London raised the point that the term was quite vague and needed clarification. He pointed out that this term could mean coup attempts coming from within the state, and the others stated that these acts were the exclusive domain of the state affected. In a paper circulated to the other missions after this meeting, the Liberian Government defined its position on what it had raised at the meeting, and what they had meant by subversive acts. They agreed with their fellow African states that it was the responsibility of their new states "by virtue of its sovereign rights, must be in a position, by means of penal and other laws to fight effectively against the subversive activities carried out by its nationals, with a view to overthrowing rightly and legally constituted authorities." What they instead seemed to be musing were foreign (i.e. non-African) powers hatching plots against their states to overthrow their regimes.¹⁹⁰ Subversive acts were placed into the agenda for the conference as item number five, and all agreed that what they had in mind were plots devised by

¹⁸⁹ "Approved Minutes of Third Meeting of Heads of Missions at the Residence of the Tunisia Ambassador on 21st December, 1957," and "Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of Heads of Missions at the Liberian Embassy on 10th February, 1958," "Minutes of Special Meeting of Heads of Missions at the Residence of the Tunisian Ambassador, on 10th April, 1958." in *Conference of Independent African States – 1958*. I. Micr. Afr. 573. Bodleian Library, Oxford.

¹⁹⁰ "Approved Minutes of Third Meeting of Heads of Missions at the Residence of the Tunisia Ambassador on 21st December, 1957," 694-5, 698, and "Annex to a Verbatim Report from Liberian Embassy," 710.

non-continental powers aimed at undermining the independent states in Africa.¹⁹¹ This is significant because it shows that in 1957 and early 1958 the independent African states were still in an anti-colonial mindset when it came to the term ‘subversive activities’. They believed that the main threats to their sovereignty and their regimes were coming from outside of Africa. None had ventured to mention and discuss (and therefore did not think) the possibility of African states using these same tactics against one another, or of using the conference as a forum to discuss such problems. Sudan, Libya, and Tunisia all had issues with Nasser meddling in their affairs, yet they curiously did not come to this conclusion and point it out in the talks. In the minds of all the African governments, whatever happened inside their state were private matters and they did believe in the sanctity of state sovereignty. In the spring of 1958, however, they did not yet entertain the thought of installing a system of rules in African diplomacy to prevent other African states from interfering in their domestic affairs.

Nkrumah wanted the spotlight on the continent of Africa for his conference, and he kept his conference agenda isolated as much as he could from other previous conferences, particularly Bandung in 1955 and the Afro-Asian conference in Cairo in December 1957. Nkrumah wanted to create a sole focus on the continent and its issues for the conference and help build up an ‘African personality’. Thus, billing this conference as a successor of the Afro-Asian conference at Bandung, a conference with very little African representation (and a conference Nkrumah never attended), would be detrimental. For one, it but it would also deviate its true lineage as a successor to the Pan-African congresses, but it would also bring the conference under the shadow of Nasser, Afro-Asianism, and issues outside of Africa. Ethiopia, however, had other ideas. Having participated at Bandung in 1955, the Ethiopian Government requested that the Bandung principles be included and re-affirmed. The Ghanaian officials grudgingly suggested that they should be attached at the end of the agenda.¹⁹² The shadow of Bandung began to creep closer as the conference drew nearer; it exposed a fault line that would pit the Sub-Saharan African states against the Arab-African states on key issues like the Algerian War and a Middle Eastern conflict, the Question of Palestine.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 703.

¹⁹² Ibid, 701-2.

Bandung had not only been a platform for independent Afro-Asian states, but also for observers from different territories under colonial rule, and some of the African governments did not see why this conference should not allow any. Apart from allowing Asian issues to creep into African affairs, when Nkrumah devised this conference he really wanted it to be effective on the world stage and therefore designed it specifically to include only delegations of independent African states.¹⁹³ Furthermore, Nkrumah seemingly wanted to distance his conference as much as he could from Nasser's Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference held in Cairo where the majority of delegations were essentially non-governmental in nature, being chocked full of anti-colonial groups. This issue was exacerbated two months before the conference because of the insistence by three Arab states, Morocco, Tunisia, and Sudan, of allowing observers from colonial territories and even allowing Algeria and Italian Somaliland the status of an official delegation to help their claims. Ethiopia immediately reminded the heads of these states that it had been agreed beforehand that this conference would only be for independent African states. Libya backed Ethiopia on this issue and, echoing Ghana's statements in the first meeting, stated that opening the door to every dependency could cost the conference its potential for success.¹⁹⁴ The matter was again raised five days before the conference, where it was requested that this time only an official Algerian delegation be allowed to join the conference. Seemingly satisfying every government involved that the issue of allowing observers was dropped, the matter was forwarded to the conference in Accra for additional debate.¹⁹⁵ Another facet of this rift was the simmering issue concerning the African states' identities. Brought up at the final preparatory meeting of heads of missions five days before the conference began, Tunisia and Morocco wondered why Arabic was not included as an official language of the conference.¹⁹⁶ This may have been an oversight by Ghana, which had planned that the conference be held in two commonly used languages in Africa for ease of communication, English and French. Although the conference was not designed to host any of the participants' African languages, it would emerge in the conference that it was nonetheless taken as a slight by the Arab states because it formed an integral part of their identity.

¹⁹³ "Approved Minutes of First Meeting of Heads of Missions in the Sudan Embassy on 15th August, 1957," 678-9.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 705-6.

¹⁹⁵ "Minutes of Special Meeting of Heads of Missions at the Residence of the Tunisian Ambassador, on 10th April, 1958," 721.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 720.

The first Conference of Independent African States

For the first time since the colonial period of Africa's history, official delegations of African governments from North, West, and East Africa were congregating to hold political talks. While every African state recognised and understood the significance of this conference for the continent's history and the people still under colonial rule, each brought to Accra different hopes and aims which led to some sparring during the conference.¹⁹⁷ As nascent African states, the stakes were high for the leaders of the delegations for several reasons. For three actors, Egypt, Ghana, and Tunisia, putting their stamp on the proceedings was crucial because it would establish and ensure a high position in the coming African hierarchy of states. Nkrumah, who had initiated the conference, saw it as an opportunity to prove to his people that he was one of Africa's most important political figures and continued the anti-colonial struggle. For the Arab states it was crucial for the Sub-Saharan states to get accept their Arab identity by having their language adopted, their issues discussed, and resolutions reflecting their concerns. As far as Nasser was concerned, he had been kept out of the planning for the conference and was clearly being put on the back foot. Thus, his aim was to push his agenda onto the conference, dominate the proceedings, bring the Africans into the Afro-Asian fold, conserve the legacy of Bandung, as well as keep building his status as one of the most important figures in the Third World.

Side-lined completely by Nkrumah from the preliminary meetings, Nasser was not pleased to see that his influence in African politics was being stymied and he was clearly vexed. Choosing not to attend the conference, he instead sent his foremost emissary, Foreign Minister Mahmoud Fawzi, with a simple set of orders. This stage might well have been set in Accra, but Fawzi was to do whatever he could to make sure the conference became an Egyptian show and to advance Egypt's interests. Fawzi wasted no time in making a very strong impression, and as is evident throughout the proceedings, he would persistently be unpleasant and an uncomfortable presence for the others. In the opening speeches of the conference, Fawzi began with criticism

¹⁹⁷ Every delegation acknowledged in the opening speeches and often during the conference meetings the significance of this moment for Africa's history and the African people still under colonial rule. See, "Conference of Independent African States – Confidential Report," in "Conference of Independent African States – 1958. I. Mic. Afr. 573." Bodleian Library, Oxford. The speeches are given on pages 2-60.

for not being allowed to express himself in a proper African language.¹⁹⁸ He changed the subject soon after, and demonstrated to the conference Egypt's personality and role on the Afro-Asian stage: "It is a distinct pleasure [...] for me to be able to bring you today, from North-Eastern Africa and *far beyond it*, the greetings and the renewed expression of gratitude of the United Arab Republic" (Egypt had begun to use this name for its state after its fusion with Syria) and reminded his state was the only African state which was located both in Africa and Asia. Furthermore, he alluded to the recent Afro-Asian conference in Cairo and stated that his government was pleased that this conference was being held in the same spirit as Bandung.¹⁹⁹ The start and tone of the speech was a strong re-assertion of Nasser's description of Egypt's identity as set down in the *Philosophy of the Revolution* – that Egypt was the bridge between Africa and Asia, and that Arabic was the cornerstone of Egypt's Islamic personality.

To the shock of Nkrumah, Fawzi then brought up two important issues for his country – cornerstones of Nasser's grand strategy – that would cause the most debate at the conference. This conference, Fawzi hoped, would highlight the continued murderous nature of colonialism, which had been revealed by France's grip on Algeria. Another important colonial power also had to be dealt with since it was equally bad – world Zionism and its ills in Palestine. Foreshadowing what he would bring up for debate in the conference, Fawzi brought up the rights of the people of Palestine and Algeria three times.²⁰⁰ Whilst the Algerian War had been raised as an issue for discussion in the preliminary meetings, the Palestine Question had not. This issue was precisely what the Ghanaian leader tried to prevent – the adoption of issues from outside of the African continent and not necessarily of concern to all African states. To the chagrin of Nkrumah, who was in attendance, Nasser was not deterred by his absence in the planning of the conference. If he couldn't control the conference by planning it, he would instead hijack it. Finally, at the end of the speech, Fawzi quickly unveiled Nasser's strategy for the conference – a series of eight points that the conference needed to address. Since Nasser had not been consulted when building the agenda, he proposed his own one which he hoped would find resolutions; apart from some

¹⁹⁸ "Speech by Dr. Mahmoud Fawzy, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Republic, Head of the United Arab Republic Delegation," "Conference of Independent African States – 1958. I. Micr. Afr. 573." Bodleian Library, Oxford, 57.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 57-9. Italics mine. By "far beyond it" Fawzi meant father than the UAR's province of Syria, and undoubtedly meant Asia.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 59, 60, 61-2.

general points, three, four, and five were most poignant: “3. Renew our adherence to the resolutions of the Asian African Conference which was held in Bandung in 1955. 4. *Express with particular emphasis* our support of the rights of the Arab Nation of Palestine. 5. Equally express our support of the right of Algeria to independence.”²⁰¹ The message was clear – Nasser wanted both the questions of Palestine and Algeria to appear separately in the conference’s resolutions, just as he had managed to do at Bandung in 1955 and in Cairo a few months prior. Egypt’s commitment to fighting colonialism was the kernel of its grand strategy, and hence Nasser was deeply invested in the Algerian resistance’s quest for independence as well as seeking ways to reclaim Palestine for the Arabs. Just as Nasser often did in international affairs, Fawzi’s conduct at the conference was destined to ruffle feathers.

Egypt’s Disruption of the First Conference of African States

The First Conference of Independent African States (IAS) began shortly after speeches were delivered by the heads of delegations on 15 April at the parliament buildings in Accra. It should be noted that the only accessible official record of this conference in existence is the English version which was meant to include all translations from the French delegations. However, many passages from delegations using French went unrecorded for unknown reasons. Thus, the contributions of the Tunisian, Moroccan, and Libyan delegations are unknown in the first day of talks. French official versions were sent to the French-speaking delegations but were not accessible at the time of writing and it is unknown if these copies survive. An agenda had been set back in late March as a result of meetings in London in the previous months and this was to be the order of proceedings at the IAS conference. The agenda stipulated that the first order of business was to be a frank exchange of views about the African states’ foreign policies, the continuing problem of colonial dependencies, the war in Algeria, the problem of race, and “the steps to be taken to safeguard the independence and sovereignty of the Independent African States.” Second on the agenda were talks on how the states could better cooperate on an economic level, as well as share technical, scientific, and educational matters. Third on the list related to holding discussions on cultural missions at both the governmental and non-governmental levels. The fourth item on the agenda related to talks on the prospect of international peace, as well as the problem of conformity with the Charter of the United Nations

²⁰¹ Ibid, 61-2. Italics mine.

and the Re-affirmation of the Principles of the Bandung Conference.” Finally, the last items were discussions about foreign subversive activities, the African maritime belt, and the option of setting up a permanent machinery apparatus of the conference.²⁰² Since Egypt had not been privy to this agenda, Nasser had other ideas in mind and put Fawzi to the task.

Kicking off the talks behind closed doors, Fawzi immediately criticized the agenda, demanded alterations, and joined the Sudanese delegation in voicing their displeasure that Arabic could not be used at the conference. Africans were meant to be able to use their languages at international gatherings and Fawzi stated that he hoped they should do so in the future. Fawzi gave the continued effect of colonialism as a possible reason, but his displeasure was aimed at the organisers of the conference, notably the Ghanaians, and Nkrumah took exception to the Egyptian slight. This noted a change of attitudes in the Egyptian camp as establishing an Arab dimension to a conference they did not plan was important; in the runup to the AAPSO conference in Cairo they had also been guilty of omitting a language, French, and only using Arabic and English.²⁰³ All the delegations then agreed with Fawzi that all African languages should be recognised and suitable arrangements be made to accommodate them in the future. Fawzi then finished the discussion of official languages with the dubious and somewhat insulting assertion that since Arabic came first alphabetically over the other languages, it should therefore come first in all official publications.²⁰⁴

The first real tense exchange of words came later that day and the division between Arab and Sub-Saharan African states was exposed as the delegations discussed the first item on the agenda, notably the Algerian Question. Liberia was shocked that during their speeches, the Arab states were making the Algerian struggle a special case over other African ones.²⁰⁵ Just as happened in the preliminary meetings in the months prior, the issue of allowing either delegations or observers from elsewhere in Africa soon came up. Tunisia, following up on the last meeting before the conference, tabled a proposal to allow an Algerian delegation to attend

²⁰² “Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of Heads of Missions at the Ghana High Commission on 24th March, 1958,” 715-6.

²⁰³ “Speech by El Sayed Yussef El Sibai,” in *Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Conference, Cairo, December 26, 1957 – January 1, 1958* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958): 53.

²⁰⁴ “Verbatim Record of Business Sessions,” in “Conference of Independent African States – 1958.” I. Micr. Afr. 573.” Bodleian Library, Oxford, 192-195, 204-8.

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 217-8.

the conference. Nkrumah then re-stated the point that this conference was only for independent African states. Liberia also explained that the Algerians were not the only nation seeking independence and that it was frankly insulting that Nigeria and Kenya could therefore not been invited and recognised if the Algerians were.²⁰⁶ Fawzi seized the opportunity to back Tunisia's request and put the Ghanaians on the back foot. He pointed out that it was ridiculous the Algerians were not invited because Algeria was a *de facto* "independent country" and subtly demonstrated that Ghana's defence of the point was not in the spirit of the United Nations which allowed 'dependent peoples' to speak.²⁰⁷ With the Arab states ganging up on the others over this issue, Nkrumah was put in an awkward position. To the surprise of many at the conference, it then emerged that an Algerian delegation had already assembled in Accra and were waiting for the chance to address the conference. There is no solid evidence showing who invited members of the FLN to Accra, but it is very likely that the Egyptian government had brought them. After all, they had done the same at Bandung in 1955, and Nasser was the closest leader to the Algerians, and their largest sponsor of arms and financial aid. It is therefore very plausible that the Egyptian government had brought an Algerian delegation to Accra to force Nkrumah's hand, and to ensure that the Algerian delegation would be made into a special case at the IAS conference.

Under the pressure from Egypt and the other African states, Nkrumah relented but only if the Algerians came to state their case to the conference. A very pushy Fawzi then pressed Egypt's case further. Fawzi argued that the Algerians were still not afforded the proper status they deserved like they had at Bandung, and that their case seemed to be taking a step back.²⁰⁸ The Ghanaian delegation, undoubtedly annoyed, then told the Egyptian Foreign Minister to stop pushing his luck. It was impossible to be fair to every nation vying for its independence given the situation because it was simply impossible to invite them all. Besides, the decision had already been made before the conference that it would only be for independent African states; therefore the Algerians already present in Accra should exceptionally be allowed to speak at the conference.²⁰⁹ That night Nkrumah backed into a corner even more, yet found a way to even out the balance between the Arabs and Sub-Saharan Africans at the conference. The Cameroonian

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 218, 222.

²⁰⁷ Ibid, 222.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, 223.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, 225.

anti-colonial figure who had sought refuge in Cairo, Félix Moumié, had arrived in Accra and called the Ghanaian leader to ask if he could be part of the conference. Nkrumah told him he would support his appearance and right to speak during the conference the next day, and the conference agreed to have him address the conference after the Algerians on April 17.²¹⁰ Nkrumah had been pipped by Egypt, and he bitterly made clear his displeasure of hosting people of non-independent nations: “let the representative from Algeria and the Cameroons appear before us with a spokesman. Give him a little time, let him tell his case and then he goes away. That is the line which we should adopt. I do not think we should allow any of them to debate anything upon it. Let them come forward, put their case and off they go.”²¹¹

Mahmoud Fawzi had first raised the issue of Palestine in the opening speeches of the conference on the first day of deliberations, and it soon became clear during the conference that Nasser had set him the goal of putting Palestine under the African spotlight. This move was very clever because with some persistent prodding, the other Arab states had to file behind Egypt. Given the unanimous and full support given to the Palestinian cause in the Arab World, the Arab states at the conference simply could not be seen going against the Palestinian cause. The Palestine Question had the potential of a domino effect of support in the Arab camp and all it needed was a little push from Fawzi. Rushing ahead of everyone to ask the chairman, Kwame Nkrumah, to speak first on the topic of foreign policies, he quickly demanded that the conference should reaffirm the principles of Bandung as well as address the unsolved problems of Palestine and Algeria.²¹² Fawzi’s tactic worked, and the Libyan and Moroccan delegations modified their discussion of their foreign policies and urged common action to support Palestine.²¹³ As a bonus for suggesting re-affirming the Bandung principles, Libya and Ethiopia jumped aboard and backed Egypt. The Ethiopian added further that the African states should form closer bonds with Asian states as “this African group of ours is in essence part of a bigger family, the Afro-Asian family.”²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Ibid, 278-82. Moumié was present at the Cairo conference and was sent to Accra by Nasser. See, “N. 1305 / 7. N. d’ordre: 431. Le Caire, le 28 avril 1958. Monsieur Jean van den Bosch, Ambassadeur de Belgique, à Monsieur Victor Larock, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à Bruxelles.” NA 14727-A. Archives Diplomatiques Belges.

²¹¹ “Conference of Independent African States – Confidential Report,” 284.

²¹² Ibid, 234.

²¹³ Ibid, 256, 259. Sudan also backed the Palestinians, as they reiterated a few days later. See, *ibid*, 493.

²¹⁴ Ibid, 253-4.

Later in the conference during a discussion on disarmament, Fawzi changed the topic entirely to bring up the issue of Palestine again and it put the attendees under pressure. He advised the preparatory committee that it should place Palestine accordingly in the draft resolutions of the conference. Up until this moment, Nkrumah had managed to sidestep the issue of adding the Palestine issue in the resolutions, but Fawzi was now bringing the issue to a head. The Ghanaian leader immediately noted that this advice was not heeded because there were members of the conference against doing so.²¹⁵ The Sudanese Foreign Minister agreed with Fawzi, but the Liberian delegation immediately protested: the Palestine Question simply did not have its place at an African conference, and besides, the Liberian government did not want to be used as a pawn in conflicts outside of the African continent.²¹⁶ The Sudanese added that the Palestine Question needed to be solved if world peace were to be achieved. The Moroccan delegation stepped in to defend the case for the inclusion of the issue at the conference. According to the Moroccans, the Palestine Question was a valid African issue because it concerned an African state, Egypt.²¹⁷ The Libyans were also in support because the issue was deemed an important security issue by Arab-African states. Fawzi then argued that the Palestine Question was an African issue because African soil had been attacked by the colonial powers when they had attacked Egypt.²¹⁸ Tunisia threw its support behind the other Arab-African states in their demand to have Palestine appear in the resolutions, noting that it was being “faithful to the spirit of the Afro-Asian group.”²¹⁹

The Ethiopian delegation, despite having shown some support to Fawzi on the principles of Bandung, failed to be swayed by Fawzi’s argument. Including this issue in the resolutions could open the limits of the African continent to redefinition; besides, they believed that the Palestine Question was better suited to be debated at the United Nations and not here.²²⁰ The Liberian foreign minister agreed with the Ethiopians on this point, and added that he was frustrated this had even become an issue for the conference because no one had been warned or advised to be prepared to debate Palestine beforehand. He was also at a loss to understand why

²¹⁵ Ibid, 493.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 494.

²¹⁷ Ibid, 495-6.

²¹⁸ Ibid, 497.

²¹⁹ Ibid, 499.

²²⁰ Ibid, 497.

Palestine was picked and so hotly contested to be a special case when the horrible ongoing situation in South Africa had not even been singled out similarly.²²¹ Finally, the Ghanaian delegation protested against the inclusion of Palestine in the resolutions because it was both an international issue, and not even on the agreed agenda of the conference. It simply was not up for debate.²²² Chairing the session, Nkrumah added to the Ghanaian delegation's riposte. There were other hot spots in the world like Kashmir and South Africa, and the conference should not look to particularise, or to give the impression that it is interfering in anyone's affairs and just leave it at that.²²³ Fawzi retorted, arguing that the colonial conflict in Algeria and Palestine were not very different in that even in Algeria the attacks came from outside of Africa so the Palestine Question was equally justified to be included in the resolutions. Most baffling to him was the fact that the Palestine Question was discussed and recognised at Bandung yet not in Accra. He then sternly traded barbs with the Liberian delegation, and it brought the day's deliberations to an abrupt end. Fawzi was vexed that the Liberians had dared to accuse the Egyptians of sneaking an item on the agenda, which of course he was: "the question of Palestine has never been [brought] through the back door; it was mentioned by several of us in our opening speeches (which was not true). If you call that back door, then we have to revise our interpretation as to that word."²²⁴

The two final days of the conference witnessed the last round of diplomatic sparring over the final resolutions of the conference, and unsurprisingly, the issue of Palestine. Fawzi once again pressed the case to include Palestine in the final resolutions and this time made an appeal for the Sub-Saharan African states to accept an issue so dear to their Arab brothers to the north: "I find myself among many hundreds and millions of peoples who would, frankly speaking, be shocked if we were to end this Conference with no mention of the question of Palestine and of the rights of the Arab nations, particularly Palestine." The case for Palestine was also in the conference's remit, he argued, because it was tasked with discussing racial discrimination and Palestine was clearly a case of "Racial Extermination."²²⁵ Tunisia and Sudan backed Fawzi, but

²²¹ Ibid, 499-500. The Liberian delegation here was trying to draw attention to the fact that an actual issue located in Africa was not getting the same attention as Palestine.

²²² Ibid, 501.

²²³ Ibid, 502.

²²⁴ Ibid, 503-4.

²²⁵ Ibid, 537, 539.

argued that Palestine could appear in the same resolution as South Africa and Kashmir, which Fawzi protested. Since the conference had agreed to put the situations of Togoland and the Cameroons in the resolutions as separate items, he asked why Palestine could not. The Liberians again pointed out that unlike Togoland and the Cameroons, Palestine was an international matter for the United Nations. The Ethiopian delegation again reiterated that the Question of Palestine was never in the agenda and therefore could not appear as its own special item in the resolutions.²²⁶ At the suggestion that Palestine could appear in a list of other world issues, the mood began to shift towards finding a reasonable accommodation. The Ethiopian delegation stated that if Palestine appeared in the same list as other international issues, it would support it because there was no harm in bringing light to a bunch of issues at the United Nations. Ghana then threw its support at this measure and said that it did consider these issues intrinsic to the problem of world peace.²²⁷ Seeing that he could not secure Palestine as its own item on the agenda, Fawzi agreed with the others because Palestine would finally appear in the resolutions. Yet Fawzi was specific in his compromise that the rights of the Arabs in Palestine had to be mentioned along with the fact that the Palestine Question was still unresolved.²²⁸ Finally, on the last day of the conference, the Liberian Foreign Minister agreed with the others on Palestine because Liberia the sole remaining minority on the issue. Liberia would join the others in supporting the Palestine Question if and only if Palestine was lumped together with other international issues in a single item in the resolutions.²²⁹ The fault line between the Sub-Saharan and Arab-African states because of Egypt's persistent prodding of the issue of Palestine finally disappeared on the last day of the conference.

The three issues of language, Algeria, and Palestine at the conference had exposed a division between the states above and below the Sahara. By questioning why the Algerians deserved to be made a special case at the conference given the number of other African nations trying to gain independence, Liberia and Ghana showed a lack of appreciation and respect for an important issue facing Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt. While Egypt considered the Algerian conflict a primary goal of its foreign policy, the conflict had reached the soil of the others. Tunisia and Morocco witnessed some fighting and spill-over into their states, and Libya

²²⁶ Ibid, 538-40.

²²⁷ Ibid, 542.

²²⁸ Ibid, 542-3.

²²⁹ Ibid, 622-4.

became a smuggling route for Egyptian arms. Palestine did appear in the final resolutions of the conference and the crux of the issue was resolved. The issue never was about questioning the merits of the case of the Palestinians for a homeland of their own, but rather deciding if the issue was an African issue or just an issue concerning some African states. There was an important distinction to draw in between the two, and it set a precedent for future official African conferences. Palestine was not an African issue just as the case of Algeria was by virtue of its location, and hence it was defined as an international issue. Palestine could still be discussed as a group, but it could never carry more weight than a continental issue. Thus, more effort and attention would be devoted to problems on the continent itself because African conferences were meant to concern common African problems.

The Conference of IAS: A Formative Experience and Future Problems

Outside of the Ghanaian-Egyptian rivalry and the short rift between Sub-Saharan and Arab-African states, the first IAS Conference was a very formative experience for all involved. The conference was above all the first time for them to congregate, converse, and debate issues they believed concerned the continent. It is very evident from the conversations in the sessions that some states attending understood the moment was a historic opportunity. Not many states had become independent thus it was possible to set the tone for continental politics for the future because the incoming leadership of states in becoming were looking up to them. Word that the conference was going to take place had indeed circulated in the African interior and in the weeks leading up to the conference many African political figures, trade organisations, student groups, and other various organisations (like the AAPSO, for instance) wrote their well wishes to the conference. These were read out to the delegations in Accra at the start of the conference and served as proof to the delegation at the conference that the whole continent was paying attention.²³⁰

In the numerous discussions of their foreign policies and how to solidify their independence, it emerged that every delegation was unanimous in agreement that the African states should not form a new bloc in world politics. Looming around this objective was the current situation in the global Cold War where the two blocs were threatening to invite the

²³⁰ Ibid, 125-190.

African states to the fold and erode their independence slowly with detrimental deals. The Sudanese argued that the Cold War was a threat to the independence of African states and their territorial integrity because each side demanded a political allegiance. Conserving one's independence, according to the Sudanese, required an independent foreign policy based on the idea of conserving the right to choose its own path.²³¹ Mahmoud Fawzi pointed out that not forming a new bloc would be beneficial for African states and the world because it would project a good image for itself and invite cooperation from other states as equals.²³² The Tunisian Foreign Minister also added that forming a new bloc in world affairs could hold negative consequences with the superpowers, as they could turn hostile towards the Africans.²³³ It was obvious to the attendees that the Cold War rivalry was problematic since both sides were eager to dispense financial and technical aid. Given the recent colonial past of the new African states, they suspected both sides of the Cold War of hiding colonial schemes in the guise of altruism. Fawzi, who still resented the Soviet encroachment of the AAPSO, made this link explicit during the proceedings as he claimed that promises of any kind of aid were a means to a colonial end.²³⁴ Liberia warned the others not to get too close to either superpower or the colonial powers because they had the potential to use 'tender offers' of aid only to gain a hefty stake in their new states with which they could be hijacked.²³⁵

Of all the topics and issues covered at the conference, the great majority stemmed from the idea and possibility of African cooperation on common issues. Colonialism had made the territories and new African states too reliant on things like communications, transport, and trade from their former metropolises.²³⁶ As the first conference allowing the new African regimes to come and meet one another, they began to realise the problem was multi-faceted and explored how to redress it. One positive method every delegation agreed to was to cultivate ties between the African states and exchange technical knowledge was using scholarship schemes. Some states, particularly Egypt, were already engaging in establishing scholarships for African students and the others quickly vowed to do the same. All also agreed that a reform of the school

²³¹ Ibid, 229. Ghana also argued along similar lines. See Ibid, 271.

²³² Ibid, 237.

²³³ Ibid, 408.

²³⁴ Ibid, 235.

²³⁵ Ibid, 405.

²³⁶ All of the delegations discussed the harmful effects of colonialism at length. See, *ibid*, 436-444.

curriculum was overdue because the colonial system imposed on them had prevented them from getting to learn about one another. Scientific and technical exchanges were also agreed to.²³⁷ There was also an agreement that the African states would meet with one another over coordination over international issues. As W. Scott Thompson noted, the African states tended overwhelmingly to side together at the United Nations after the conference.²³⁸

Although not discussed at length during the conference, the attendees did address the need to discuss the prospect of economic cooperation as a means to break one of the most important vestiges of colonialism.²³⁹ Each state recognised it was at an economic disadvantage compared to the two world blocs, and that their peoples were suffering for it. After all, the future that the leaders had promised in their anti-colonial struggle had to be delivered. Roads had to be built, water sources had to be devised, domestic industry built, and economic diversification stimulated.²⁴⁰ While all agreed on economic goals, there was no consensus as to how to reach them, and some states offered no solutions. Others, like Ghana and Egypt, were supporters at the conference of eventually creating a common African market.²⁴¹ For others like Morocco, felt it was far more appealing to cooperate with one another than relying on the colonial powers for support. The Ghanaians agreed with the Moroccans and suggested borrowing from international organisations instead of states as an interesting option.²⁴² Some delegations realised that projects needed to take place to better the lives of their citizens and that these required them to seek economic aid. The Ghanaian delegation agreed with the Liberians and added that it was better for them to turn down economic aid if it meant becoming a colonial puppet. Better to be poor with independence than rich in servitude, said the Ghanaians.²⁴³ Nothing concrete was decided upon at the conference on the economic front, but all knew that a source of economic aid had to be found.

Whilst every state at the conference had suffered from the colonial powers' callous transgression of their right to rule themselves (a fact every one of them mentioned often), some

²³⁷ Ibid, 467-483.

²³⁸ W Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 40-1.

²³⁹ The Tunisian Foreign Minister explicitly stated the point, and it was supported by the Moroccans. See, *ibid*, 247, 260.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, 454.

²⁴¹ Ibid, 455.

²⁴² Ibid, 435.

²⁴³ Ibid, 412.

of the states who attended had also suffered another form of uncomfortable foreign intrusion in their affairs. In the conversations and speeches about the conduct of foreign affairs or International Relations, some delegations hinted that the African states themselves may have the potential to succumb to sins of their former colonial overlords. Although it was neither pinpointed, discussed, debated at length nor were any pointed accusations levelled against one another, the delegations of Tunisia, Liberia, Sudan, and Libya hinted that the African states harboured the seeds of imperialism[1]. It therefore began to dawn on a few of the states that they could be in danger from other African states. The first three had experienced Egypt's intrusion in their domestic affairs first-hand. In Tunisia, Nasser fomented dissent by supporting its opposition leader, Salah Ben Youssef. In Libya, Nasser made the Kingdom suffer tense relations with the French Government and the presence of French army patrols on its soil because he considered it a mere highway for his weapons caravans destined for Algeria. The Sudanese Government had also not forgotten that in 1954 Nasser tried to influence the outcome of its general election and was caught red-handed bribing pro-Egypt Sudanese political figures.²⁴⁴ In the case of Liberia, William Tubman had not suffered from any foreign intrusion from the continent, but his opening speech at the conference and his delegation did show his fear that it could happen.²⁴⁵ The delegations of these states showed this in a few ways, but all essentially grounded their comments on inter-African affairs around the idea of the sanctity of sovereignty. The head of Libya's delegation, for example, said this in his opening speech: "To attain these objectives, the Independent States of Africa ought to coordinate their efforts in sincerity, confidence and *mutual respect for the differences in their political systems and institutions.*"²⁴⁶

The Libyan delegation later reiterated its message in a discussion on the prospects and goal of peace - if peace were to become a reality, several principles needed to be abided by like respect for self-determination, "respect for the political system in each state and *non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states.*"²⁴⁷ The head of the Sudanese delegation mimicked the Libyans' message, stating (and perhaps even warning the Egyptians) that the choice of domestic

²⁴⁴ "Telegramme de Khartoum du 24 octobre 1954, N. 133/35." 213QONT/490. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

²⁴⁵ Tubman's fear might have come from his impression of Nkrumah and his possible pan-African ambitions. See, W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 33, 38.

²⁴⁶ "Speech by Dr. Wahbi Elbury, Libyan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Head of the Libyan Delegation," "Conference of Independent African States – 1958." I. Micr. Afr. 573," 33. Italics mine.

²⁴⁷ "Verbatim Record of Business Sessions", 492.

institutions and Sudan's political system was Sudan's own, and that it was also not looking to impose this system on any other state.²⁴⁸ In the conference deliberations, the Sudanese Foreign Minister advised that the states gathered in Accra should enact a "guiding principle to respect the independence and [territorial] integrity of our respective countries."²⁴⁹ The Tunisian delegation, in a discussion on the foreign policies of African states suggested that common ground and ideals should guide the foreign policies of African states, and the basis of which should be the acceptance of cooperation and full respect be given to each others' territorial integrity and sovereignty.²⁵⁰ The Tunisians tried to push for unanimity behind a defining principle in African affairs by stating at the end of their discussion that "we have unanimous agreement in respect of what we should have, in fact as well as in words, *for the integrity and independence of other African states.*"²⁵¹ These words would often be repeated by Bourguiba and many other African allies until finally enshrined at the Addis Ababa summit of 1963, but at the first conference of the IAS the topic fell dead because interest was instead focused on the meddling of African affairs by non-African states. Although differing opinions did not emerge at this conference on these points nor were any direct accusations of 'imperialistic' behaviour levelled onto other African states, diplomatic conflict did arise a year after the conference as Ghana, Egypt, Morocco, and Mali became guilty of breaching the sovereignty of other African countries.

During the conference and in the open discussion of the two particular topics of 'racialism' and 'subversion', an important theme emerged that all of the African states shared. Some states talked about the important issue of ending the type of racism brought in from Europe in the previous centuries and of finding a way to protest the ongoing racial strife in South Africa. Some states, like Sudan, even went as far as proclaiming that end of racism in African countries would bring about true democracy and promote the equitable development of their countries. The motivations for the African states to eradicate racism, however, was not quite as altruistic as it seemed because it was also very self-serving. According to the Sudanese delegation, the non-discriminatory redistribution of resources and development was a sure-fire way of controlling their domestic opposition; this would therefore conserve the states' territorial integrity and

²⁴⁸ "Speech by His Excellency Sayed Mohamed Ahmed Mahgoub, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, Leader of the Sudanese Delegation," in *ibid*, 49.

²⁴⁹ "Verbatim Record of Business Sessions", 396.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 408-9.

²⁵¹ *Ibid*, 408. Italics mine.

independence.²⁵² In other words, African states with racial problems were liable to leave the door open for coups and conspiracies from minority groups if they did not properly insulate their regimes from them. Racism was a tool that their opposition could wield and if the current regimes adopted more inclusive policies with all societal groups they would be more secure. While the Sudanese were arguing of the domestic dangers to the regimes because of the structure of their populations, the Liberian delegation reminded the conference of the danger of foreign states preying on domestic cleavages to find a foothold in other states' affairs. Throughout the conference the Liberian delegation was incredibly insistent on getting all involved to come to a definition of subversion and agree to oppose it as a tool of foreign policy because every one of them could be a target from outside because of their troublesome domestic opposition. The Liberian delegation explained that if foreign states could link up with dissident groups within their own states, leading the foreign power with a disproportionate amount of influence and the end of independence.²⁵³ It is evident that the attendees of the conferences understood that they all had the twin goal of conserving their independence and their regimes. To reach it, they all had to devise strategies to contain their domestic opposition and insulate themselves from foreign prodding.

The Balance Sheet of the Conference of IAS

Overall, the first state-level conference of between the independent African states was a good formative experience for all involved. While one of its aims was to uncover and define a common 'African personality' for the final resolutions, the head of the Liberian delegation pointed out at the end of the conference that they had fallen short because "it seems to me that we do not know what [it is]."²⁵⁴ He was, however, a little quick to admit defeat because in the discussions, the delegations had sketched a general picture of what it meant to be an African state. All of them found that they had the similar goals of conserving independence and their territorial integrity as well as wanting to bring colonial rule to an end in Africa. Every delegation understood that because of the ongoing effects of colonialism they suffered from the same host of systemic problems and realised that there was potential to work together to attenuate them. They had been separated from one another and ruthlessly exploited to the point that the new

²⁵² Ibid, 396-7.

²⁵³ Ibid, 396-7.

²⁵⁴ Ibid, 538.

African states had to pick up not only from scratch, but from a position of great disadvantage. The new states were at great economic disadvantage and suffered from the existential threats of domestic opposition. Cooperation was therefore chosen by all as the way forward to redress these ills; the states promised at the conference that they would get to know one another, would begin to share with each other, and would cooperate on their foreign policies to resolve common continental and international issues. Another important achievement of the conference was the compromise found over what to do with the Palestine Question. Not only did the debate demonstrate the difference of the identities and priorities between North African and Sub-Saharan African states, but their compromise on the issue showed that the Sahara, once a mighty colonial barrier, could no longer separate the nations on either side of it.

While this was a definite good step in the right direction, some problems began to emerge which would loom larger as months went by. The failure to define a set of rules to conduct relations with one another was one of the main issues allowed the next five years of inter-African relations to sour considerably as each state remained judge over its own actions. One of the obvious drawbacks of the conference was the fact that the attendees were not numerous in such a vast continent. Thus, only a small number of states claimed to represent a much bigger whole and effectively founded a political program and agenda for continental affairs without other important parts of the continent. Apart from the FLN and a Cameroonian figure, no other African observers were allowed to participate and have an influence in the making of the resolutions. Other parts of Africa were poised to enter an important new phase of negotiation for independence with their respective colonial powers and they had not been invited. Thus, when the territories of the ex-AOF became independent and had much different ideas of continental politics, many states who had been to Accra in 1958 were taken aback.

Nkrumah could rightly claim to be content with the conference. Not only did he bring the centre of continental attention to Accra, but he managed to direct the proceedings well enough to prevent Egypt from turning the conference into a virulent anti-colonial propaganda tool. Unlike the resolutions of the Cairo conference held months before, the first Conference of IAS was much more moderate, measured, and much less vitriolic. This made the African states look like they wanted to engage in international relations as equal and reasonable partners with a respect for existing international organisations like the United Nations. There were no overt diatribes

aimed at the colonial powers nor were threats given out to them. Unlike in Cairo a few months earlier, no propaganda campaign was started by the independent African states against the colonial powers. Even on the topic of support for the Algerian resistance, there was no consensus on providing more than moral support despite FLN and Egyptian requests to provide material support.²⁵⁵

Chapter III: The Converging of Ghana and Egypt's Foreign Policies

The three years after the Conference of Independent African States witnessed a slew of changes in Africa's political landscape. The rivalry between Nasser and Nkrumah finally ebbed as both realised their views were much closer than they had originally thought. Thus, starting in the summer of 1958, a gradual harmonisation of their African policies took place converging on a constant theme – the need to banish colonialism from the continent. Given the situation in West Africa and the Maghreb, it was only natural that they set the sights of their foreign policy on France. Much was beginning to be at stake by the summer of 1958 as Charles de Gaulle announced a referendum for that the African territories to decide whether to continue their partnership with France with some major reforms and the promise of future independence or immediately claim independence and sever all ties with France. This began to rally some Sub-Saharan African states together with North African states around the issue of France's continued presence and intransigence on the continent. The start of nuclear testing on African soil in the desert of Algeria only concretised the anti-colonial opposition towards France. Of all the issues the continent faced, France's colonial policy stood above the rest as the most important because it both transcended continental rivalries and allied many states in opposition to French continental presence and policy initiatives. Thus, from 1958 to 1961, the issue of taking a stand against France was the node through which Ghana and Egypt were not only able to put their rivalry on hold, but also to find many allies in their anti-colonial crusade. The rallying of the

²⁵⁵ The Ethiopian, Ghanaian, and Liberian delegations indicated that if this proviso was included in the resolution they would be bound to supply arms, and also hinted that this could raise tensions with the colonial powers. Nkrumah, despite allowing the FLN to state its case at the conference, was clear that the only thing they could expect from the African states was moral support. Nkrumah would of course famously change course at the end of the year at another conference. Ibid, 309-10, 560-6.

anti-colonial crusade on the continent culminated in the founding of the Casablanca Group in January 1961.

Overcoming the Frosty Start of Ghana-Egypt Relations

The relationship between Ghana and Egypt since the latter's independence in March 1957 was that of a good rivalry for control over the discourse and direction of post-colonial African politics. Ghana, as the new state aspiring to punch above its weight, naturally saw the more popular Egypt as a competitor and roadblock for its aspirations to become the leading voice in African affairs. Nasser had pipped Nkrumah by a few months to be the first host an African conference, and Nkrumah did his best to keep him in the dark about the state-level conference in Accra. Nkrumah was initially very disturbed that Nasser used African conferences as a platform to advertise causes that had nothing to do with Africa and tried to keep him in check at the Conference of Independent African States. W. Scott Thompson, the only other scholar to have delved into their relationship in this period, claims that Nkrumah and Nasser never moved on beyond this point, rarely saw eye-to-eye on African issues, and therefore only "found a basis for cooperation only on international Afro-Asian radical causes."²⁵⁶ It is surprising that Thompson came to that conclusion because in nearly every position Ghana and Egypt took in African affairs from 1960 to early in 1963 Nasser and Nkrumah backed one another. On many defining issues in continental affairs, like the Algerian War, French nuclear testing, the problem of Mauritania, the Congo Crisis, and the creation of the Casablanca Group of states, Nasser and Nkrumah worked together because they shared important common ground – an important desire to liquidate colonialism. From the summer of 1958 onwards, they realised their points of view were hardly irreconcilable which made cooperation more appealing rather than stay at odds with one another. Two important events took place which gave Nkrumah a deeper appreciation for Nasser's foreign policy and his desire to fight colonialism wherever possible.

In June 1958 Nkrumah embarked on a follow-up tour to every capital of the states that had attended the IAS Conference a few months earlier to meet their leaders to gauge their reactions to the conference. The visit to Egypt was very appreciated as Nkrumah stretched it from five to eight days at Nasser's insistence. As a result of their talks they found they shared the

²⁵⁶ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966*, 40.

same general views on “positive neutralism” and the need to take a strong stand against any French nuclear testing in Africa. Nkrumah, however, could not be swayed to take a stronger stand on Palestine than he already had at the conference, so both declared their support a “just solution.”²⁵⁷ The following month a few crises happened in which Nasser sought Nkrumah’s help. In the second week of July a crisis erupted in Lebanon which brought Nasser’s attention to Middle Eastern matters. Ghana’s ambassador in Cairo wrote to Nkrumah relaying the message that he had unexpectedly met Nasser who urgently asked him for a favour to “use your influence over American President and Canadian Premier [to] terminate military preparations.”²⁵⁸ There is some evidence that Nkrumah did try to help Nasser. In a foreign policy speech to parliament a few months later he admitted to supporting Egypt’s position and for pushing for the solution to swap American troops for a UN peace force.²⁵⁹ In the same week Nasser invited Ghana’s ambassador to sit with his diplomatic corps for a series of emergency foreign policy meetings. In the first meeting, Ghana was made privy to an African problem, Egypt’s border dispute with Sudan. The last meetings were about the details surrounding General Qasim’s overthrow of the Iraqi Monarchy; the Egyptian Foreign Minister asked the ambassador if he “could you use [his] influence to ask our friend [in] Ghana [to] accord early recognition” of the new Republic of Iraq.²⁶⁰ What is most important about the meetings was not Ghana’s choice of course of action on the matter, but the fact that Nasser made a Ghanaian ambassador privy to Egypt’s foreign policy meetings shows an unprecedented level of trust and desire to work together. A few months after the crisis Nkrumah began to signal he had buried the hatchet over Nasser’s introduction of Afro-Asian issues into African affairs. In his foreign policy address to Parliament, Nkrumah declared “those principles enunciated at the Bandung Conference have been solemnly restated by the Accra Conference of Independent African States and constitute a permanent basis of our policy.”²⁶¹ By the end of 1958 at another Ghanaian conference, Nkrumah was showing more signs of coming more closely aligned to the core of Egypt’s African policy.

²⁵⁷ Ibid, 39-40.

²⁵⁸ “Telegram Sent to H. E. the Prime Minister in U.S.A. Ghana Embassy Washington. July 21st, 1958.” RG 17/1/112. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁵⁹ “Press Release No. 799/58. Prime Minister’s Speech on Foreign Policy Made in Parliament on 3rd September, 1958.” 50QO/20. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

²⁶⁰ “Enclosure A. Embassy Ghana Cairo. Copy of telegram sent in code.” RG 17/1/112. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁶¹ “Press Release No. 799/58. Prime Minister’s Speech on Foreign Policy Made in Parliament on 3rd September, 1958.” 50QO/20. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

The summer of 1958 made Nkrumah understand that Nasser would always appreciate it if he could help him with any issues he was facing in Africa or the Middle East and ensure their continued good relations. Nkrumah did help Nasser and from 1960 onwards, Nkrumah no longer had any scruples with publicly siding with him, even at the detriment of its oldest ally in the Middle East, Israel. A secret meeting at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York before a UN General Assembly session in the fall of 1960 gave a glimpse of Nkrumah's commitment to his relationship to Nasser. In his suite, Nkrumah met with the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Mahmoud Fawzi, and Ahmad Shukeiri (who in 1964 would become the first head of the PLO). He informed them that Ghana was willing to push Israel to accept the right of return of the Palestinian refugees and to demand that the Israelis return to a designated area under the 1947 Partition scheme.²⁶² Nothing came of the suggestion, but it reassured Nasser that Nkrumah was indeed on his side in the Arab-Israeli conflict despite his early friendship with the Israelis. Nkrumah's suggestion in New York paved the way to Ghana's public commitment to support the Egyptians on the Question of Palestine when he signed to the resolution on Palestine in the Casablanca Charter of January 1961.²⁶³

Common Foreign Policy Tactics: Egypt and Ghana's Attempts to change Borders

An important aspect of the Egyptian and Ghanaian regimes' anticolonial foreign policies was their beliefs in the lack of any tangible justification of current borders between African territories and states. Since the colonial powers had subjected the continent to as incredible amount of injustice by the tactic of 'divide and rule' which had pitted African peoples against each other, Nasser and Nkrumah not only disregard them as artificial, but also open to revision. Publicly, the African regimes advocated for these revisions to be negotiated in concert with the parties concerned, but public statements often did not match up with what was really taking place.²⁶⁴ In many cases the means used to achieve these revisions were varied and included the support of dissident communities who straddled borders, troop movements to show possession of

²⁶² "A Meeting held in the Osagyefo's suite at the Waldorf Astoria, New York, on the 4th October, 1960." RG 17/1/49A. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁶³ The Israeli Government was irate with Nkrumah's open support of Egypt and other states on the Question of Palestine and they deposited a complaint to Nkrumah, but to no avail. See, "CO/AF/2A. Embassy of Israel, Accra. January 16th, 1961." RG 17/1/239. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁶⁴ The AAPC's resolution on borders was one of many instances where Ghana and Egypt backed negotiations for the revision of borders. See, "Conference Resolution on Imperialism and Colonialism," in "Information Bulletin on African Affairs." ADM 16/1/15. PRAAD.

a contested piece of territory, the meddling in another state's elections, and even assassination attempts (real or alleged) on stubborn leaders. It is incredibly difficult to tell today – as it was for many African leaders at the time – if rival claims for territory and support for minorities living across one's own borders were justified by the injustice of colonialism or if they were simply flagrant attempts at land grabs or even plots to collapse foreign regimes to install more friendly ones. Determining whether the motivations for the claims were purely ideological or for more selfish considerations is not particularly relevant for this study. What is most important for the development of inter-African relations is how the other African regimes perceived these claims, and in a great many cases they cried foul. These attempts to change the colonial borders were therefore a great factor behind the division of Africa into camps in 1960-1 because they chipped away any form of trust between some of the African regimes.

Other than Morocco, which was the main perpetrator of the largest divisive African issue in this period by claiming Mauritania for itself (which is covered in its own chapter), Ghana and Egypt were guilty of making claims on contested territories. In the case of Egypt, Nasser's intrigues in the affairs of other Arab states of the Middle East were well known, and in Africa he also made claims on southern territories which were contested by Sudan in February 1958. The Sudanese-Egyptian relationship since Nasser's coup in 1952 was rather troubled. In the fall of 1954, for example, Nasser still secretly held the hope of uniting Egypt with Sudan and sent his most important propagandists, Salah Salem, on a secret mission to Khartoum to influence the Sudanese elections. Becoming a bit of a laughingstock in the process, Salem was caught red-handed giving suitcases of money to Sudanese pro-Egyptian politicians.²⁶⁵ In February 1958 problems between Sudan and Egypt arose once more as neither held the same interpretation of the Anglo-Egyptian agreements from the colonial period delimiting their borders. Instead of holding talks with the Sudanese leadership, Nasser sent troops to accompany a political mission to two disputed areas just north of the 22nd parallel to bring the necessary equipment in order to allow the people living – which Egypt declared were Egyptians – to be able to participate in the upcoming plebiscite on the presidency of the United Arab Republic.²⁶⁶ Nasser's move was indeed an aggressive one, showing possession and backing it with threat of violence and his

²⁶⁵ “Télégramme de Khartoum du 24 octobre 1954, N. 133/35.” 213QONT/490. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

²⁶⁶ “PB/PH. Ambassade de France au Soudan. CO. 112/AL. Khartoum, le 20 février 1958.” 379QONT/615. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

justification was reported to be quite flimsy. Unsurprisingly, the Egyptian government quoted not from the official treaty they had signed with the British in 1902, but instead from an unseen Egyptian interior ministry document from the same period.²⁶⁷ The Sudanese leadership dismissed the Egyptian claims as fabricated and stated that even if they had used the Anglo-Egyptian document it would be void because the contracting parties from the 1902 agreement did not include Sudan.²⁶⁸ The matter of the lands just above the 22nd parallel remains unsettled until this day, but showed the lengths that Nasser would go to try to capture territory for Egypt.

The greatest perpetrator of claims on contested land was Kwame Nkrumah. In this respect, Nkrumah was truly shameless as he never hid his intentions and it enraged fellow Franco-African leaders, particularly Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Sylvanus Olympio, and Léopold Senghor. Nkrumah's claims on Togo were never made secret and revealed for all to see in his 1957 *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*.²⁶⁹ Despite his attempts to cajole its leader, Sylvanus Olympio, of accepting Ghana's call to reunite all the lands of the Ewe population (which straddled both borders) inside Ghana proper, Olympio never relented to having a state under the borders respected by UN mandate. Nkrumah then proceeded to undermine Olympio by proxy, a policy which continued until Olympio's mysterious assassination on January 1963. Nkrumah contacted the youth movement called the *Mouvement de Jeunesse Togolaise* (or Juvento) who had split away from Olympio's Committee of Togolese Unity party and enticed them to his idea of unification by offering to fund their activities, offer them asylum in Ghana, and give them more exposure by inviting them to his African conferences. Nkrumah's backing of Juvento raised fears both with French colonial officials and in Lomé that they could now possibly beat Olympio in the next elections.²⁷⁰ Nkrumah's constant calls for Togolese territory and his many public spats with Olympio unnerved many leaders in West Africa, most notably

²⁶⁷ "RAU 7-1s. Front. Afrique-Levant 21 fev 1958 arrivée. Londres, le 20 fevrier 1958." 379QONT/615. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

²⁶⁸ "Telegram Sent to H. E. the Prime Minister in U.S.A. Ghana Embassy Washington. July 21st, 1958." RG 17/1/112. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁶⁹ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, 259-64.

²⁷⁰ "FM/JR. N. 52. A/s: Visées expansionistes du Ghana. 29 Septembre 1958." 50QO/20. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

Senghor who often warned him to stop because he was undermining the sovereignty of Togo and Ivory Coast.²⁷¹

Nkrumah also had history of a difference of views with his eastern Ivorian neighbour, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, whom he insultingly tried to lobby to use the Ghanaian model to gain Ivory Coast's independence in the spring of 1957, and even allowed the Ghanaian media to call the Ivorian leader a French 'puppet' throughout 1958.²⁷² That year, the Ivorian state (backed by French colonial officials) was involved in the clearing out of peoples considered troublesome to the state, including foreign citizens, and as many as 4,000 of them resettled in Ghana.²⁷³ In the spring of 1959, Nkrumah met with Houphouët-Boigny to complain about the location of the border as many refugees were still coming across.²⁷⁴ Some of these citizens came from a region that straddled the two countries, the Kingdom of Sanwi, and they held a series of grudges against Ivory Coast. The people of the Kingdom of Sanwi resented the Ivorian state's violence against villages of minority groups along the Ivory Coast-Ghana border and their efforts to take away their local powers in order to centralise the state's power in Abidjan. One such individual, Armand Attié, claimed to represent the King of Sanwi and a Provisional Government of Sanwi which had proclaimed its right to claim independence from Ivory Coast in May 1959. Initially wanting to join de Gaulle's *Communauté* but rebuffed by France, they now explained to Ghanaian officials that "they would rather like to have independence in association with Ghana."

The Ivorian leader and the French responded by sending 650 paratroopers to arrest members of the provisional government, causing many to flee to Ghana. George Padmore, then Nkrumah's chief advisor on African affairs, asked Attié to be more precise regarding their demands before he could submit a formal request to Nkrumah. Padmore even believed that if the people of the Kingdom of Sanwi could proclaim they were of more 'Ghanaian stock' than Ivorian then their case could be submitted to the UN as a matter of debate between Ghana and France alone.²⁷⁵ A few weeks later Attié returned to Accra stating that the people of the

²⁷¹ "N. 288. Léopold Sédar Senghor, à Monsieur Kwamé Nkrumah, Prime Minister, Accra. Paris, le 23 Mars 1960." RG 17/1/204. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁷² "N. 362/AL. Accra, le 16 septembre 1958." 7PO/1/1, Accra, Ambassade. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes, Archives Nationales de France, and W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, 12.

²⁷³ Ibid, 88.

²⁷⁴ "Confidential. The Sanwi Affair. 235." RG 17/1/159. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

Kingdom of Sanwi decided “to assure the Government of Ghana that the King and people of Sanwi remain firm in their request for annexation to the Independent Sister State of Ghana, with certain safeguards such as the recognition of a special status, similar to that of Scotland or Wales in the United Kingdom [...] and equal rights in the State of Ghana.” Attié also notified the Ghanaian leadership that the King of Sanwi had sent the same message to the French, whom responded by handing over his messengers to the Ivorian authorities who had them jailed.²⁷⁶ As far as Houphouët-Boigny was concerned, this meant that Ghana was supporting the claims of the so-called leadership of the Kingdom of Sanwi which was unacceptable and was very likely insulted that Nkrumah had not brought up the claim with him personally and chose to do so with the French instead. When Nkrumah pressed the claims further in early 1960, Houphouët-Boigny went on the air and angrily announced that “[Nkrumah] has neither the right, nor the means, to demand [...] the annexation of the least portion of the Ivory Coast.”²⁷⁷

Houphouët-Boigny’s response to the Ghanaian backing of the Kingdom of Sanwi’s provisional government was understandable partly because Nkrumah claimed part of his country’s territory, but also for another astonishing reason. Padmore’s thoughts of sidestepping Ivory Coast reflected the belief that Houphouët-Boigny was a mere puppet of the French and therefore had no say on the status of borders at all. It was also highly likely that Nkrumah shared Padmore’s attitude because he was allowing newspapers in the country at the time to publish articles accusing Houphouët-Boigny of being a “stooge and traitor” as well as a “puppet dancing savagely to the tunes of the French imperialist shampoolah.”²⁷⁸ This harsh attitude to the African leaders with ties to the French showed the Ghanaian leader to hold a double standard – that as a leader of a country he could judge whether borders should be shifted and disregard the claims of others if he judged these figures to be puppets of a colonial power. This gave the allure of Nkrumah’s claims being underpinned by spurious justifications. By tacitly supporting the Sanwi to attach themselves to Ghana, Nkrumah was also signalling to other African leaders that the Ivory Coast was not a properly united society deserving of a state, therefore undermining the regime’s claim to rule.²⁷⁹ After a crackdown in the Ivorian portion of the Kingdom of Sanwi,

²⁷⁶ “The Kingdom of Sanwi. Declaration Concerning the Request for the Annexation of Sanwi to the Independent State of Ghana.” RG 17/1/159. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁷⁷ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966*, 88-9.

²⁷⁸ Ibid, 88.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

Attié became a refugee in Accra under the auspices of the Ghanaian intelligence service, and operated a network of agents in the border regions to agitate against the Ivorians.²⁸⁰ This forced the Ivorian leader's hand, and he sent government agents and the military to clamp down on the pro-Ghana sentiment in the border regions as well as to put a stop to cross-border traffic.²⁸¹ Ghanaian intelligence services reported in February 1960 that Houphouët-Boigny was of Nkrumah's support of the Kingdom of Sanwi, calling them "militantly hostile" to his country and prompted a series of radio broadcasts refuting Ghana's support.²⁸² The pressure Nkrumah put on the Ivorian state explains why Houphouët-Boigny accepted Senghor's invitation to form a united bloc of Francophone states later that summer despite being a history of rivalry in the AOF.

The Soft Power Offensive against Colonialism: Ghana and Egypt's Propaganda Campaign

A very large feature of Egypt and Ghana's anti-colonial foreign policy in Africa was the attempt to create a dominant narrative about decolonisation. With this established, the regimes could then win the race to seize control of the continent's political discourse on Africa's future relationship with European actors and hoped it could yield real political victories. There was good reason to be optimistic in this campaign. In the Middle East Nasser's radio programme, *Voice of the Arabs*, was incredibly successful in achieving political objectives. Not only did the radio programming build domestic opposition to many Arab regimes, it was also a contributing factor in preventing Arab states like Jordan from joining the Western-led Baghdad Pact and the collapse of the Iraqi royal family.²⁸³ So how did the manipulation of radio bring Nasser political success? There were two reasons: firstly, Nasser merely capitalised on circumstance. In the age where transistor radios became inexpensive, Egypt found itself as the lone state in the Middle East or Africa with enough powerful radio equipment to be able to broadcast both at home and abroad. Thus, Nasser understood that he had no competition to tap into the potential of a very large domestic and foreign audience. The second reason, and equally important, was that Nasser

²⁸⁰ "Accra, le 23 Janvier 1960. A Monsieur Paul Yankey, Directeur de la Surete Nationale de l'Etat du Ghana," and "Jerome Kaku, Enchi. Mr. Attie, Chief of the Provisional Government of Sanwi." RG 17/1/159. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁸¹ "Translation. 25th January, 1960." RG 17/1/159. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁸² "Top Secret. Personal. Intelligence Appreciation for the Month of February, 1960." RG 17/1/89. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

²⁸³ Douglas Boyd, "Development of Egypt's Radio: 'Voice of the Arabs' under Nasser," *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. 52, no. 4 (1975): 648-50.

knew how to connect with a mass audience and not just a small segment of society. Before radio, the previous Egyptian regimes relied on printed material to disseminate their message, and given the very low rate of literacy, this meant that regimes were most able to communicate with only the very small segment of high society who were literate.²⁸⁴ To ensure a wide base of listeners, and much like Nasser himself employed in speeches, a mixture of colloquial Arabic with neo-classical Arabic (then used by the media) was used. Not only was he able to establish a solid connection between the regime and the Egyptian masses, but given that Egyptian colloquial was widely understood all over the Arab World because of the popularity of Egyptian films, Arabs outside of Egypt also began to identify themselves with the *Voice of the Arabs* and the Nasserite regime in Cairo.²⁸⁵

Wielding the *Voice of the Arabs* as an important political tool in his foreign policy arsenal, Nasser was able to contest the narratives espoused by foreign regimes and draw popularity to his own message both at home and abroad. In other words, by using his radio installations in Egypt, Nasser was able to disrupt the legitimacy of foreign regimes by putting pressure on their relationships with the domestic population. Understandably, Arab regimes viewed Cairo's broadcasts as a threat because it meddled in their countries' affairs, but beginning in the mid-1950s, Cairo's anti-colonial message also found new opponents, Britain and France. Filled with catchy slogans and rich in rhetorical devices, Nasser's radio service extolled the virtues of the Egyptian state's anti-colonial policy and portrayed the colonial powers as the largest evil.²⁸⁶ So successful was the radio network and its programming that the colonial powers viewed it as a real threat to their interests on the continent because it had the potential to foment opposition. The British, in their leadup to their invasion of Egypt in the fall of 1956, bombed one of the transmitter installations at Abu Zamal close to Cairo.²⁸⁷ The French, whom had been subjected to Cairo's virulent campaign of support for the FLN, tried a less direct approach after the debacle of Suez. France, unlike the other Arab states who were defenceless because they did not possess radio equipment themselves, had the means to set up their own counter-propaganda radio program against Nasser and they did so clandestinely. Speaking to an Indian journalist in February 1959, Nasser admitted his government was subjected to a French propaganda campaign

²⁸⁴ Ibid, 645.

²⁸⁵ Ibid, 646.

²⁸⁶ PR 10116/4/G. 15/3/61. 'Hostile Radio Propaganda from Cairo.'" FO 1110/1370. UK National Archives.

²⁸⁷ Ibid, 649.

from a secret radio station in Turkey.²⁸⁸ Nasser's radio programming was so influential that even the Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld, complained to Nasser and appealed to him to tone down the radio propaganda during the Lebanese Crisis of 1958 against the Western powers, presumably at the behest of Britain, France, and the United States.²⁸⁹

Given the response of the colonial powers and the success of the *Voice of the Arabs* in affecting change in Middle Eastern politics, Nasser was optimistic he could spread his anti-colonial message to sub-Saharan Africa with similar effect. From 1954 onwards, Nasser's radio service began to accept African liberation movement figures to Cairo and encouraged them to broadcast from his radio installations in their language under a program called the "Voice of Free Africa."²⁹⁰ In less than two years, these radio transmissions were beginning to seriously worry African colonial administrators because Cairo's general slogan of "out with the European" was catchy, "easily understood" by the public and therefore made European presence in Africa more difficult.²⁹¹ What is perhaps most astounding is the large growth of Egypt's radio program for Africa showing the importance the regime held for African politics. By March 1961, the British Government conducted a large study of Cairo's radio activities for the Foreign Office and noted that it was broadcasting in many languages used on the continent including Arabic, Somali, Swahili, Hausa, Amharic, English, and French. The content was judged by British colonial administrators because it paid support to "extremist movements and policies" and inflamed "anti-Western tensions by misrepresentations of British, French and U.S. policy in Africa." The study also described the language and tone of the Voice of Free Africa as "violently abusive of the remaining white administrators and residents in the Continent [...] who must be driven out by force."²⁹²

While the British did not record the numerous instances of inflammatory and abusive language of the broadcasts, another worried colonial power in Africa, Belgium, did and their

²⁸⁸ "VG 1432/2. Minute. Clandestine Radio Station. 26/2 [1959]." FO 371/142025. UK National Archives.

²⁸⁹ Douglas Boyd, "Development of Egypt's Radio: 'Voice of the Arabs' under Nasser," 650.

²⁹⁰ Ibid, 647, "PR 10116/4/G. 15/3/61. 'Hostile Radio Propaganda from Cairo.'" FO 1110/1370. UK National Archives, and "P/Geo/5. Le Service de Radiodiffusion Égyptien." Folder 14.804/14.805. Belgian Diplomatic Archives. The Belgian Government noted that in 1954, Cairo Radio's African program began to broadcast in Swahili, expanding to more African languages like Hausa in 1960.

²⁹¹ "Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. N.D. Watson, Mr. Carstairs." Letter dated 18 March 1958. CO 1027/237. UK National Archives.

²⁹² "PR 10116/4/G. 15/3/61. 'Hostile Radio Propaganda from Cairo.'" FO 1110/1370. UK National Archives.

recorded transcripts demonstrate that Nasser was tapping into a large pool of resentment against colonialism, white administrators, the West, and at times, the communist countries. A February 1958 broadcast in Swahili bluntly laid out its message: “Africa belongs to Africans and it must keep belonging to Africans. Why then are we allowing ourselves to be governed by the white pigs?” The host argued that the Western powers were lying about the state of Africa and charged that colonial administrators were thieving European money meant to go towards helping Africans. The host called upon former and active black soldiers to “rise up against the white pigs so they could give us our liberty and independence now.”²⁹³ July 1960 broadcast in Swahili described the West as “pigs” and “dogs” waging imperialism who were merely competing with communists who were trying to trick Africans into swapping one master for another. The programme advised that the real enemy was still at home and that Africans needed to unite “to banish colonialism” because what Africans truly desired was to be completely rid of “imperialist pigs.”²⁹⁴ Nasser’s regime was indeed proud of its efforts, flaunting it publicly in the media as “the vanguard of African radios” which made it “a powerful weapon in our hands, serving our policy and its aims, which the free Africans adopt.” Perhaps what made the regime so proud was that their transmissions were indeed effective since they evoked strong responses from its colonial enemies: “the imperialist States have often complained about our radio behaviour and said that it was a main cause of the movements against the imperialist system.”²⁹⁵ This was hardly surprising given the amount of coverage given to Africa; almost ten hours of broadcasts a week were dedicated to Africa compared which nearly equalled the thirteen given to the *Voice of the Arabs*.²⁹⁶

A similar study conducted by the Belgian Government concurred with the findings of the British and added that the station’s African programs routinely clamoured for the unity of African states in order to blunt the imperialist forces menacing the permanent fracture of Africa.²⁹⁷ The African broadcasting from Cairo portrayed Nasser as a true leader of

²⁹³ “Annexe 11 au n. 081/134/xvii.9.0. du 20 mars 1958. Congo Belge, Quartier Général de la Force Publique, État-Major-G2.” AF-I-57, sub-folder AN-I-57, Belgian African Archives.

²⁹⁴ “Mise en garde contre l’impérialisme capitaliste ou communiste.” AF-I-57, sub-folder AN-I-57, Belgian African Archives.

²⁹⁵ The British quoted directly from a news article about Cairo’s African broadcasts in the popular newspaper, *Al Akhbar*. See, Ibid.

²⁹⁶ “P/Geo/5. Le Service de Radiodiffusion Égyptien.” Folder 14.804/14.805. Belgian Diplomatic Archives.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

decolonisation whom served as a role model for African states because of his success fighting the colonial powers. Egypt, they reasoned, did so in order to set itself as a yardstick to put other regimes under pressure if not even destroyed.²⁹⁸ The *Voice of Free Africa* sometimes went further, however, by intervening in situations and trying to incite violence. In December 1959 Belgian colonial officials also reported in the prelude to the King's visit to Congo Cairo radio upped the ante by warning the Congolese that the King was duplicitous and that they should keep up their struggle. The radio host also argued that if need be, they were justified to take arms in their anticolonial struggle like their Algerian brothers.²⁹⁹

Padmore's Brainchild: the All-African People's Conference, December 1958

After the relative failure to shape the discourse of the IAS Conference, Nkrumah, like Nasser before him, turned his hopes to convincing African nationalist of his strategy for decolonisation. Nkrumah charged his pan-African partner George Padmore with assembling delegations of willing nationalist movements to Accra to discuss how to defeat colonialism on the continent. There was no doubt that this was going to be Ghana's show and that it would try to steer the conversation to produce results Nkrumah wanted. The conference was funded entirely by the Ghanaian state, and Padmore produced the invitations or 'the call' to the December conference in Accra which already tried to place limits on its discourse: "This Conference will formulate and proclaim the philosophy of Pan-Africanism as the ideology of the African non-violent revolution."³⁰⁰ In the opening speech of the conference Nkrumah reiterated that his country had "pride in our determination to support every form of non-violent action which our fellow Africans in Colonial territories may find it fit to use in the struggle."³⁰¹ Non-violent resistance, a Ghanaian hallmark of its own struggle for independence, was to be one of the dominant themes, and Nkrumah hoped he could inspire the nationalist movements on the continent to do the same. He urged the attendees to stay at the spearhead of continental anti-colonial efforts because they had to above all attain and consolidate their independence. Yet he reminded them that the continent was not only rocked by the desire for independence, but also equally jarred by the feeling of building unity. The Ghanaian leader pointed to the case of the

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ "N. 081/54/XVII.9.0, Léopoldville, le 20 janvier 1960." AF-I-57. Belgian African Archives.

³⁰⁰ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966*, 59-60.

³⁰¹ "Welcome Address Delivered by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister of Ghana," in "Information Bulletin on African Affairs." ADM 16/1/15. PRAAD, 36.

recent Ghana-Guinea union and explained it was merely a steppingstone to a union of West Africa and of a larger Union of African States just as the thirteen colonies had formed the United States of America.³⁰² This was necessary, he continued, because “it is only within this context of interdependence and co-operation, regardless of the constitutional framework in which it will ultimately find expression,” that the Africans could finally be able to “solve the disastrous legacies of imperialism, especially the arbitrary divisions of peoples on our Continent.”³⁰³ Finally, the total liquidation of imperialism and colonialism, he argued, would achieve peace in the world as they were the two main causes behind the century’s two world wars.³⁰⁴

At the conference’s end, Nkrumah could judge that Padmore’s conference had brought Ghana a decent measure of success. 300 delegates from nationalist movements from all parts of Africa attended and participated in the deliberations, and perhaps dubiously, claimed to be representing 200 million Africans.³⁰⁵ The resolutions left Nkrumah very pleased, bar one, because they were very closely aligned with what he had set down in his opening speech; the nationalist movements, in other words, had adopted a large chunk of Ghana’s ideas. In the resolution on colonialism and imperialism, the delegates accepted Ghana’s understanding of the terms, and condemned Europe for luring them in NATO alliances, free trade areas, and in warning to the Francophone territories, the European Common Market because their only aim was to give solidify “their Imperialist activities in Africa and elsewhere.”³⁰⁶ The resolution on “Frontiers, Boundaries, and Federations” essentially backed Nkrumah’s idea of needing to form unity among African states, but fell just short of recommending the Nkrumah’s idea of a United States of Africa instead opting for a ‘commonwealth of free African states.’ The resolution urged all movements to pursue more than independence because “the existence of separate states in Africa is fraught with the dangers of exposure to imperialist intrigues and of the resurgence of colonialism even after their attainment of independence, unless there is unity among them.”³⁰⁷ With some important consequences for the near future, the conference also adopted Nkrumah’s views on colonial borders. The conference judged that colonial borders were entirely artificial

³⁰² Ibid, 38-9.

³⁰³ Ibid, 40.

³⁰⁴ Ibid, 42.

³⁰⁵ “Conference Resolution on Imperialism and Colonialism, in “Information Bulletin on African Affairs.” ADM 16/1/15. PRAAD, 47.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Ibid, 53.

because they had been “drawn by imperialists to divide African peoples [...] to the detriment of Africans and should therefore be abolished or adjusted.” It did urge leaders of African states to negotiate to come to an arrangement on any border issues, but the resolution never mentioned any acceptable steps for leaders to take if they could not come to an agreement.³⁰⁸ This last resolution only restated a commonly held belief rather than be prescriptive. This left the door open for some states, especially Ghana, Egypt, and Morocco, to try to use nefarious means to change borders.

While the conference was a success for Ghana because it gained acceptance and the spread of basic ideas like the need for unity, it was also instrumental in founding many relationships between Nkrumah and the leaders of movements of national liberation, many who began to idolise him. One leader, Patrice Lumumba, was stirred enough to engage in immediate action against their ruling colonial power at home.³⁰⁹ This must have pleased Nkrumah because it only confirmed that his anti-colonial efforts were reaching one of the desired effects – the disruption of colonial rule on the continent. Yet Nkrumah and Padmore had not sent invitations to everyone to attend the conference, but merely gambled on the ones they believed would be most receptive to Ghana’s ideas. Confirmation of the suspicion and displeasure from another colonial power began to stream onto Nkrumah’s desk as French complaints over the fact that only the radical Francophone African leaders like Sékou Touré, Djibo Bakary, and Félix Moumié were invited and not the leaders closest to France.³¹⁰ The French understood, just as Nkrumah, that skewing the attendance would lead to less debate and division at the conference, therefore ensuring passage of more radical views. What Nkrumah could not foresee at the time, however, was that his preference for close relationships with more radical elements from the territories under colonial rule would lead to suspicion and diplomatic tensions with the less radical leaderships who emerged once those states became independent. Senegal’s and Togo’s most powerful opposition parties, the PAI and Juvento, were present at the conference and would remain guests of Ghana under the aegis of the AAPC and continue to agitate against the leaderships of their home states.³¹¹ Nkrumah’s support of the more radical elements in Africa therefore came at a cost because it was a tremendously divisive force in African politics as

³⁰⁸ Ibid, 54.

³⁰⁹ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966*, 62.

³¹⁰ Ibid, 62-3.

³¹¹ “All African Peoples’ Conference News Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 5.” ADM 16/1/11. PRAAD.

leaders like Léopold Senghor and Sylvanus Olympio cried foul often over Ghana's intrusion in their domestic affairs.

Perhaps the most significant effect of the AAPC was one that Nkrumah and Padmore never intended. The invitations and Nkrumah's opening speech carefully stated that the conference's aim was to discuss non-violent means to use in the struggle for independence. The GPRA of Algeria, four years into an armed conflict with France, saw things differently and sent Frantz Fanon to make the case to support violent means if necessary. In his address to the conference Fanon described his first-hand experience fighting with the Algerians and argued that non-violent means was simply futile against French colonial repression because they had always responded to it with violence, citing the protests in the Casbah as evidence. Fanon's words rang true to the many resistance figures assembled as he reminded them that "Africa is at war with colonialism" and since their strong violent oppression showed the will of the imperialists to remain in Africa, that all movements of national liberation should envisage dislodging them "by force of action and, indeed, violence."³¹² The argument, for those at the conference who were still living under colonial rule, was very persuasive. While many at the conference, like Kenya's Tom Mboya, for instance, were convinced of Fanon's argument, they pointed out that it did not necessarily mean they preferred immediately taking up arms because it was the option of last resort.³¹³ The conference therefore decided in its resolutions to give

"its full support to all fighters for freedom in Africa, to all those who resort to peaceful means of non-violence and civil disobedience as well as to all those who are compelled to retaliate against violence to attain national independence and freedom for the people. Where such retaliation becomes necessary, the Conference condemns all legislations which consider those who fight for their independence and freedom as ordinary criminals."³¹⁴

This resolution was a blow to Nkrumah's foreign policy because up to this point, he had strongly sold Ghana's example of its liberation as the best model and advocated the non-violent means

³¹² Jeffrey Ahlman, "The Algerian Question in Nkrumah's Ghana, 1958-1960: Debating 'Violence' and 'Nonviolence' in African Decolonization," *Africa Today*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (2010): 74.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 75.

³¹⁴ "Conference Resolution on Imperialism and Colonialism," in "Information Bulletin on African Affairs." ADM 16/1/15. PRAAD, 48.

which made it possible.³¹⁵ The conference's agreement that violence could be justified and supported made Nkrumah's position very awkward.³¹⁶ On the one hand, the policy of supporting armed violence brought Ghana much more closely aligned with Egypt, who had been supporting armed movements in North Africa since 1954. On the other, however, Ghana would now be associated with that decision and this was the source of problems, especially since the conference established a permanent secretariat of the AAPC in Accra to help organise anti-colonial resistance and spread the conference's influence by widespread propaganda.³¹⁷ Given that many opposition parties had come to the conference (Senegal's PAI and Togo's Juvento being prime examples), it was bound to arouse suspicion from territorial leaders and their colonial partners who understandably viewed the AAPC as a threat. Whether Nkrumah wanted it or not, Ghana was now fully committed to a radical anti-colonial foreign policy just like Egypt. The race to establish a set of ideas for other movements of national liberation was coming at a large cost to Nkrumah; instead of getting closer to the African unity he desired, he caused fissures and drove other states away from Ghana. This division was only driven deeper as he pushed his anti-colonial foreign policy

Ghana's Anti-Colonial Propaganda Campaign Turns against France

Since the mid-1950s Egypt used propaganda as an effective foreign policy tool, and a year after its independence, Ghana followed suit. Unlike Nasser, however, Nkrumah did not possess the equipment to use the radio as the medium for sustained continental propaganda campaign until 1961, so he resorted to the circulation of printed materials, media coverage of strong speeches at home to attract attention, and the clandestine funding of political parties that could help achieve Ghana's objectives. Interestingly, the cause for the start of Ghana's propaganda was the same as Egypt's – France's African policy – and he also took a strong anticolonial line. After coming back to power in France, De Gaulle's announced in Brazzaville he would hold a referendum that autumn giving the choice to French African territories to belong

³¹⁵ Jeffrey Ahlman, "Road to Ghana: Nkrumah, Southern Africa and the Eclipse of a Decolonizing Africa," *Kronos*, No. 37, Rethinking Cold War History in Southern Africa (November 2011): 24.

³¹⁶ Jeffrey Ahlman, "The Algerian Question in Nkrumah's Ghana, 1958-1960: Debating 'Violence' and 'Nonviolence' in African Decolonization," 76.

³¹⁷ "Conference Resolution on Imperialism and Colonialism," in "Information Bulletin on African Affairs." ADM 16/1/15. PRAAD, 48. The AAPC routinely published and circulated newsletters with featured major speeches of Nkrumah and journalistic (which were often sensationalistic). A great amount of these are located in ADM 16/1/11 and ADM 16/1/12, PRAAD.

to a ‘Community’ of states with France or secede entirely to claim independence. Coming four months after a rather dismal Conference of Independent African States, Nkrumah read this as an opportunity to intervene to chase out colonial influence and put his stamp on African affairs. A few weeks after the announcement Ghanaian news articles began to appear castigating France’s call for its African territories to remain tied to the metropole. Naturally, French diplomatic officials began to worry about the sharp rise of anti-French rhetoric in the Ghanaian media because it menaced their future on the continent as well as the leaders of their territories. For instance, an article in the *Ghana Times* on 15 September entitled “Reject de Gaulle’s Constitution” accused the French of blackmailing Africans into postponing their independence. The article warned Franco-Africans not to trust the words of the Ivorian leader, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who was a French “puppet” and called on Africans under French rule to rise up to liquidate colonialism.³¹⁸ Ghana’s *Evening News* was also taking part in the abuse of France’s image in Africa at that time, French diplomats reported. The newspaper called for Africans to vote ‘no’ in the upcoming referendum because de Gaulle was a dictator who could not be trusted. A vote in favour of de Gaulle’s referendum, they reasoned, would turn their current African leaders into his own “puppets” which would not change their situation of French domination. Voting for independence, the newspaper argued, was best because it would uproot European imperialism, lend more moral support as independent nations to the Algerians, and as new African nations, they would be allowed to organise their own economies.³¹⁹ Ghana’s anti-colonial and anti-French media coverage aimed to be very intrusive in a French internal affair by affecting the relationship between the French state, the Francophone African leaderships, and their electorate. Naturally, Ghana’s efforts to disrupt French colonial politics unsettled the French who conducted more thorough investigations of Ghanaian motives as well as lodged complaints of interference to the Ghanaian Government.

In mid and late September 1958, the Quai d’Orsay published two internal reports of Ghana’s propaganda campaign against them. This campaign, the French officials wrote, seemed to be waged independently of the Ghanaian Government, but they found that its architects,

³¹⁸ “N. 362/AL. Accra, le 16 septembre 1958.” 7PO/1/1, Accra, Ambassade. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes, Archives Nationales de France.

³¹⁹ “Louis de Guiringaud, Ambassadeur de France au Ghana à Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères Direction d’Afrique-Levant. Accra, le 16 septembre 1958.” 7PO/1/1, Accra, Ambassade. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes, Archives Nationales de France.

George Padmore and T.R. Makonnen, were acting on the blessing of Kwame Nkrumah. The report noted that Ghana was engaged in a struggle to win the leadership of the pan-African mantle by the “sending of printed materials in the French territories, invitations addressed to the political leaders of French Africa, [and] receptions hosted in Accra.”³²⁰ Two weeks later another report was produced by French diplomatic staff and found that Ghana’s tactics were yielding results. Many important political figures and dissidents from territories like Guinea, Upper Volta, and Niger were lured to visit Ghana and meet Nkrumah. Worse for the French was that these figures, which included PRA leaders like Djibo Bakary, received important subsidies from the Ghanaian leader to help their political parties in their struggle for independence. Once in Accra, they also took care to visit the Egyptian embassy which was also embroiled in an intense anti-French propaganda campaign.³²¹ The French were infuriated at the Ghanaian Government because they lodged a mixture of complaints and threats over their public posture on the referendum, Algeria, and Togo, none of which caused Ghana to stop.³²² Whilst Nkrumah was unsuccessful in preventing a general ‘yes’ vote in the 1958 French constitutional referendum, his propaganda campaign did achieve a measure of success. His anti-colonial message had tapped into the existent discontent in the youth of the populations of the French territories which coincidentally put pressure on their regimes to defend the argument their territories were better off staying in the French orbit. Defeated by the yes vote, many groups, like Senegal’s PAI, continued to identify with Ghana’s anti-colonial project and discourse, and travelled to Accra to agitate against their own regimes and the French.³²³

During the 1958 referendum on de Gaulle’s constitution, all French territories in Africa, bar one, were able to parry the strength of their domestic opposition and convinced their populations to vote for ‘yes’ to enter *la Communauté* and a reformed partnership with the metropole. In the runup to the vote in the summer of 1958 Sékou Touré, the Guinean leader,

³²⁰ “GH-7-1. 18 Sept. 1958. a/s: Action de propagande du gouvernement du Ghana en faveur du mouvement panafricain.” 50QO/20. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

³²¹ “FM/JR. N. 52. A/s: Visées expansionistes du Ghana. 29 Septembre 1958.” 50QO/20. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

³²² Ibid, and “GH-7-1. 18 Sept. 1958. a/s: Action de propagande du gouvernement du Ghana en faveur du mouvement panafricain.” 50QO/20. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France.

³²³ The list of attendees to the All African People’s Conference, a notorious anti-colonial conference hosted by Nkrumah in December 1958, included many student groups and dissident political parties of French Africa like the PAI, Cameroon’s UPC, a student union of Franco-African students called FNEAF, and the remnants of the PRA. See, “All African Peoples’ Conference News Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 5.” ADM 16/1/11. PRAAD.

believed Guinea would be better off supporting de Gaulle's new constitution and found a considerable amount of support in the RDA for his position. In the last month before the vote – which coincided with Nkrumah's propaganda campaign – Touré's popularity sank under pressure from the grassroots. New dissenting voices from a younger generation (youth and student groups) teamed up with teachers and trade unions to criticise the older generation, especially Touré and the RDA, because of their strong links with France.³²⁴ As pressure was mounting on Touré, on 14 September 1958, the RDA convened in a final conference in Conakry to give its final position on the referendum. As the Guinean leader walked in the building to give his speech at the end of the debates, he was met with a very boisterous audience of members of the unions of teachers, students, and youths shouting 'no' repeatedly. The pressure had become too much, and two weeks before the referendum, Touré changed course. He proclaimed that Guinea would not want a new colonial pact with France but should instead vote no in the referendum to claim its independence.³²⁵ De Gaulle's wrath at the news of Guinea's independence was incredible: France completely broke ties with its former colony and ordered a complete French withdrawal. In the days leading up to the referendum Touré, in secret, still held hope in the first days of independence that he could come to terms with France and stay in the Zone Franc and negotiate a form of association with France whilst staying outside the *Communauté*. Once independence was achieved, however, his hopes were dashed as France refused to renew any economic or technical aid, and within 48 hours, all French personnel were ordered to come back to France.³²⁶ Worse was to come for the Guinean President as France vengefully began to isolate Guinea diplomatically.³²⁷ Yet help was on the way to save him and his state from Ghana, a move that came at a great cost of constraining Guinea's foreign policy orientation until well into late 1961-2. From Nkrumah's point of view, Guinea's independence and troublesome situation could nicely play in his favour. After all, he had been proclaiming over the past year that Ghana's independence would remain meaningless unless the whole Africa were free, and here was an opportunity to make due on his promise. Nkrumah extended his arms quickly to the Guinean leader and offered him an emergency loan and a plan, to which Touré consented, to unite the countries together and serve as the nucleus of a future, much larger

³²⁴ Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea*, 135, 143-4.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 162-3.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 166, 168-171.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 172.

United States of Africa.³²⁸ Nasser also welcomed the news of Guinea's independence. He happily sent the first message to Touré recognising his state, and announced he was pleased to welcome a fellow African state who "refused to join France."³²⁹

Putting Pressure on the Colonial Powers: Ghana and Egypt's Anti-Colonial Propaganda Campaigns

In 1958-9, Egypt was still the lone African country to possess the radio equipment required to spearhead the propaganda campaign on African soil. The Ghanaian Government took note that it was establishing a continent-wide anti-colonial message against Western powers and their African puppets and that they urged Africans to look to Egypt and Nasser for help in their liberation efforts.³³⁰ In early December 1959, Nkrumah realised he was late to the game and needed to get in on the action. His aides advised him that it was high time for Ghana to broadcast its own "vigorous propaganda news broadcast" and Nkrumah not only agreed, but also knew that if it were to be an effective vehicle for Ghanaian policy, its listeners had to know who was behind the efforts. He thus decided that every radio broadcast should therefore sign on with "this is the Voice of Africa coming to you from Radio Ghana, Accra," and his African Affairs Committee vowed to assemble enough "propaganda material" to begin broadcasting the following month.³³¹ Despite their will to broadcast almost immediately to challenge Egypt's supremacy of the airwaves, the start of the broadcasts of the *Voice of Africa* was pushed one year behind schedule as clear problems emerged. In August 1960 the Ghanaian Cabinet was informed that the construction of transmission masts in Tema was taking longer than anticipated, and that the broadcasting service could only be counted on to broadcast in French and English as it still had not hired the staff needed to be able to transmit in Hausa, Swahili, and Arabic.³³² The first transmissions of the *Voice of Africa* began in the late summer of 1961, and they were very much copying the format of Egypt's *Voice of Free Africa*. Every part of Africa was singled out for a

³²⁸ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966*, 67-73.

³²⁹ "Embassy of the United Arab Republic, Accra. No. PF. 1st December, 1958." BAA/RLAA/703, Padmore Library, Accra.

³³⁰ "Secret. Copy 170. UAR – Reorganisation of Armed Forces According to Soviet Pattern." RG 17/1/114. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD. The document was undated but included in a folder of documents from 1958-9.

³³¹ "Sixth Meeting of the African Affairs Committee Held at the Flagstaff House at 1 P.M. on Friday, 4th December, 1959." RG 17/2/501. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

³³² "Progress Report on Ghana Broadcasting System's International Service." ADM 13/2/74. PRAAD.

daily 45 minute propaganda broadcast in the appropriate language (English, French, Portuguese, Hausa, Swahili, and Arabic).³³³

As France Flexes its *Grandeur*, the List of African Opponents Gets Longer

On 13 February 1960 near the town of Reggane in the Algerian Sahara, France detonated its first nuclear bomb as part of the *Gerboise* program and joined the elite club of nuclear powers as its fourth member. While Charles de Gaulle was undoubtedly beaming with pride at bringing France closer to its lost *Grandeur*, it came at a cost to his country and its African allies because his poor choice of site for the test. France did receive warning signs in advance that there would be opposition if it ever carried out nuclear tests in the Sahara. As far back as September 1958 and again in July 1959 the French Foreign Ministry knew that Kwame Nkrumah had warned them not to carry out any nuclear tests on African soil because it risked the “severest condemnation from all Africa.”³³⁴ Nkrumah’s response to the first nuclear test was immediate – in the days after the test, Ghana froze all French assets in the country in protest.³³⁵ Nkrumah’s initial reaction was ideologically motivated because France’s choice of detonating the weapon in Africa forced the continent’s entry in the nuclear age.³³⁶ In the weeks following the blast, however, Nkrumah’s opposition was motivated by obvious worries for the health and safety of Ghanaians. Despite France’s public assurances that no nuclear fallout would travel to populated African areas, its timing was poor because of great winds (called the Harmattan Winds) blowing through the blast area. As a result, the Harmattan Winds carried radioactive fallout over a wide swath of West Africa raising radioactive levels throughout Ghana and Mali.³³⁷ The *Gerboise* program was the perfect pretext for Nkrumah to galvanise more opposition to France, and he immediately

³³³ “Voice of Africa, Vol. 1, No. 9, September, 1961. Édition anglaise-française.” ADM 16/1/31. PRAAD.

³³⁴ “Press Release No. 799/58. Prime Minister’s Speech on Foreign Policy Made in Parliament on 3rd September, 1958.” 50QO/20. Le centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Archives Nationales de France. The joint communique of Saniquellie by Ghana, Guinea, and Liberia in July 1959 also warned France not to conduct tests in Africa. See, “Joint Communiqué. K.N. 18/7/59.” RG 17/2/720. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

³³⁵ “Cabinet Memorandum by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Subject: Second French Nuclear Test in the Sahara.” ADM 13/2/71. PRAAD.

³³⁶ Nkrumah mentioned this in his opening speech to a conference held in Accra in 1960. See, “Positive Action Conference for Peace and Security in Africa. Accra, 7th to 10th April, 1960.” ADM 16/1/24. PRAAD.

³³⁷ “Cabinet Information Paper by the Minister of Defence. Subject: Radio-Active Fallout over Ghana.” ADM 13/2/88. PRAAD, and “N. 288. Léopold Sédar Senghor, à Monsieur Kwamé Nkrumah, Prime Minister, Accra. Paris, le 23 Mars 1960.” RG 17/1/204. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

reached out to other African states to convene an emergency conference to protest French behaviour in Africa.

Nkrumah's efforts to gather a conference, however, clashed with the views of Francophone African states, and this brought another butting of heads between Senghor and Nkrumah. In a very frank letter to Nkrumah, Léopold Senghor rejected the idea a conference needed to be held at all. Naturally the nuclear test worried Mali, he explained, but France had privately reassured him the tests would not harm his citizens. It would also be fraudulent to single out France for its nuclear testing when 207 similar nuclear tests had been conducted by others before; what was more acceptable was a general condemnation of all nuclear powers. Senghor pointed out that trying to bring a conference to discuss France's conduct in Algeria was also unnecessary because Mali was already putting pressure on France to solve the issue peacefully, and besides, it was too complex a problem for them to solve. Senghor then ended the letter on an accusative note. If Ghana was trying to forge some sort of African cooperation on common issues, perhaps it ought to revise its foreign policy because its territorial claims on Togo and Ivory Coast were raising fear in the region.³³⁸ Senghor's letter angered Nkrumah who dismissed any allegations of foul play in Togo and Ivory Coast. Nkrumah expressed his disappointment that Senghor did not agree an African conference was needed because France's nuclear testing "constitute[d] a practical danger in its results on the material life of Africa."³³⁹ For Nkrumah, France had once again attacked Africa with devastating effect and should be singled out by African states. Nkrumah expressed his disappointment with Senghor over his views on Algeria: "Ghana's stand has been consistent with our declared policy of pursuing our goal for the total liberation of the entire African continent from foreign domination" and said that he was therefore obliged to say that "the complexity of the Algerian question does not alter the principle that it is wrong to impose foreign rule upon a people."³⁴⁰

Despite the Mali Federation's refusal to heed Nkrumah's call for a conference against French behaviour in Africa, many African states did respond favorably. Six days after France's second nuclear test in Algeria on April 1st, official state delegations from Egypt, Morocco (who had cut diplomatic relations with France over the first test), Guinea, the GPRA, Libya, Sudan,

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ "2nd April, 1960. My dear Senghor." RG 17/1/204. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

Ethiopia, and Tunisia assembled in Accra for the Positive Action Conference for Peace and Security in Africa in protest. Also joining were representatives of dissident parties from Senegal and Cameroon, as well as nationalist parties from East Africa and South Africa.³⁴¹ In the introductory speech, Nkrumah warned the conference to remain vigilant for the constant threat of imperialism because the French were still showing signs of its imperialist nature by exploding nuclear weapons on African soil. He counseled them not to listen to French statements because that their new form of “nuclear imperialism” was incredibly harmful to African lives. Scientists from the West, he claimed, had concluded that the fallout of the explosions would result in “the birth of fifteen-thousand abnormal children” and put one million lives in danger. Nkrumah seized the opportunity to use the conference to further criticize France’s role in Africa. In a barb to Senghor and his ilk, He claimed that France were also the authors of yet another “New Imperialism”, which was designed to trap “the “parts of Africa in Common Market and Trade Preference areas set up by industrial Europe.” In a clear nod to the Egyptian delegation, Nkrumah also noted with disdain the spurious French argument that Algeria was part of France, adding “France belongs to the continent of Europe.”³⁴² Nkrumah’s opening speech unsurprisingly coloured the conference’s resolutions, with Egypt also bringing their influence to bear for its own ends. In the resolution concerning French nuclear testing, the conference “calls upon our brothers and sisters in French Community States in Africa who are equally and directly endangered by these lethal atomic tests in the Sahara to join us in our struggles and efforts to bring pressure to bear on the Government of France to stop further nuclear tests.” The resolution on Algeria, whose entire proceedings was chaired by Egyptian diplomat Fouad Galal, declared that all African countries provide “effective support for the militant Algerians in their fight for independence.”³⁴³

France’s African policy, which included a war in Algeria and now atomic tests that carried radioactive fallout throughout parts of North and West Africa, was becoming increasingly difficult for some African states to defend. The Soudanese leadership³⁴⁴ inside the Mali Federation were growing weary of their supposed French allies because they increasingly

³⁴¹ “Positive Action Conference for Peace and Security in Africa. Accra, 7th to 10th April, 1960.” ADM 16/1/24. PRAAD.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ French Soudan had fused with Senegal to form the Mali Federation.

believed the French were trying to re-assert their authority and dominance in the whole of the Sahara which threatened Bamako's hold on the country's north. In late 1959 the French secret service tried to conserve France's sphere of influence in the north by convincing the Tuareg leaders of northern Sudan to call for their own independence but did not find overwhelming support. The Sudanese leadership were alerted of French designs and kept their guard up. In January 1960 the French Government, during a Francophone West African defence conference announced it wanted to rectify Sudan's Saharan border and give more Saharan territory for their Algerian province.³⁴⁵ According to Vincent Joly, the French Government wanted to extend its grasp and control of the Sahara for security reasons as the FLN had announced the start of a Southern Saharan front.³⁴⁶ Unlike with the Senegalese, trust between the French and the Sudanese eroded fast because of France's wishes to conserve a sphere of influence in the Sahara. The ongoing Algerian War and France's attempt to assert its control in the Sahara was thus a major cause of concern to the Sudanese leadership, and their relatively quiet support for future Algerian independence only grew in 1959-60.³⁴⁷ It is therefore plausible that the French nuclear tests in the Sahara close to their border was interpreted by the Sudanese as yet another signal that France was bullying its way to gain the Sahara for itself. When the Sudanese attempt to take over control of the Mali Federation failed in August and France stood up for Senegal, Modibo Keita immediately blamed France for its breakup.

There is evidence that Nkrumah sensed discord building between Senghor and Keita before the breakup and sought to reach out to the latter. Given the machinery of state within the Mali Federation, Nkrumah wanted to do so privately without the Senegalese finding out, so he contacted Keita's uncle and great admirer of Ghana's foreign policy, Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse, a famous Sufi leader in Senegal. Nkrumah shipped Niasse a shiny new Buick and asked for an introduction to Keita, which Niasse was only too happy to oblige. Thanking him for the car, Niasse replied that Keita was interested to come visit Ghana to meet Nkrumah.³⁴⁸ While the visit never occurred owing to the tense situation building up to the breakup of the Mali Federation,

³⁴⁵ Vincent Joly, "Du Soudan français à la République du Mali: Une indépendance dans la douleur (1956-1961)," 171-2.

³⁴⁶ Ibid, 172.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ "El-Hadji Ibrahima Niasse. Kaolack, le 19 juillet 1960." RG 17/2/23. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

Nkrumah was poised to get in touch with Keita who now found himself isolated and surrounded by Francophile states. On 8 September, Keita signalled through his nephew that he wanted to assess and inform him of Mali's economic situation. Keita hoped that Ghana could help financially with taking Mali out of the French monetary zone and into an African zone. He raised the fact that Ghana had come to Guinea's aid after its betrayal by the French with a ten-million-pound loan which proved to all Africans that one's complete independence did not lead to economic collapse. Keita's nephew claimed in the letter that Mali needed Ghana just as badly and that a grand gesture was needed to introduce Nkrumah to the hearts and minds of Malians and that an advance of ten million pounds would likely do the trick.³⁴⁹

While Nkrumah mulled the request, Keita dispensed with the messengers and sent a letter to Accra with his version of the events that led to the split. Nkrumah was undoubtedly ecstatic to hear a version of the narrative he had been warning against for so long. Keita explained that the split was "inspired by the French colonialists, faithful to their secular policy of dismembering our dear Africa." The proof, Keita said, was that France intervened in the internal affairs of the Mali Federation to recognise the independence of Senegal. As a result, he hoped that the Ghanaian Government could recognise his renamed state, the Republic of Mali, and back its entry into the United Nations.³⁵⁰ Nkrumah not only agreed, but also sent a goodwill mission to Bamako to study the state of its economy and recommend an amount for an emergency loan to help Mali leave the French economic zone. It merely confirmed that Mali was in dire need of economic aid (some 16 million pounds), and the mission concluded that a lower figure of five million was enough for Nkrumah to help rescue Mali and "lay the foundations of a future African Monetary Zone."³⁵¹ Shortly after, Keita travelled to Accra to meet Nkrumah, where he was offered financial aid and both leaders concretised their new alliance by declaring their wish to begin to build a political union in Africa.³⁵²

That November, Nkrumah arranged his first visit to his new allied state of Mali and disregarded their request that the size of his party be limited to under twenty. Nkrumah was

³⁴⁹ "277. Accra, Ce 8 septembre. Excellence." RG 17/1/204. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

³⁵⁰ "N. 669 PGM. Sudanese Republic, President of the Council. Bamako, the 15th Sept. 1960." RG 17/1/204. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

³⁵¹ "Report of Meetings between a Ghana Goodwill Mission to the Republic of Mali and Representatives of the Government of the Republic of Mali." RG 17/1/204. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

³⁵² W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966*, 146.

coming to Bamako as a victor and brought a very large party for the visit which shocked the Malians, but nonetheless ensured a warm welcome. Nkrumah's visit brought much fanfare and the largest Malian newspaper, *l'Essor*, reminded readers that Nkrumah was the saviour of Guinea in the aftermath of de Gaulle's referendum and came to Mali in its hour of need during the Mali Federation's breakup.³⁵³ Nkrumah's ego was stroked by the welcome to his grand visit and definitely drew the wrong conclusions from the Malians' welcome. One of his first public announcements in Bamako surprised the Malian regime because it overstepped the boundaries of their understanding of their 'political unity.' Ghana and Mali, Nkrumah claimed, would share one parliament; the Malians, understandably confused and surprised by the claim, kept silent. Modibo Keita and his leadership harboured no intentions to cede or share any form of sovereignty with Ghana, and his feelings were obvious in the joint communiqué of the visit which mentioned only that Mali supported "political unity in its most general sense."³⁵⁴ Mali's split from the rest of Francophone Africa only fuelled Nkrumah's belief that the pressure he had applied on France was generating results and that other leaders were coming to the same conclusions he was. There is some evidence to suggest that Nkrumah's interpretation of the Mali split was askew. Mali was forced to come to Nkrumah for economic aid and to relieve it of its encirclement by Francophile states. Keita was forced to seek common allies to put pressure on France because Mali's domestic politics had turned completely against him and the French desire to scoop the Sahara for itself threatened Mali's hold on the north. Mali's desire to come to Nkrumah was therefore driven by expediency and not a commitment to Nkrumah's vision to build a United States of Africa.

While Nkrumah's anticolonial campaign did have an influence in corralling together like-minded African states and even luring Mali away from France into its camp, there can be no question that the most influential factor was France's complete bungling of its African policy. Nkrumah was gaining allies in his anti-colonial crusade, and a few months after the conference, was proud to add another state, Mali, to Ghana's list of allies. This encouraged Nkrumah to keep up his anti-colonial position and his propaganda machine running. If Ghana had been able to help push Guinea and Mali away from France and into Accra's orbit, then perhaps the time was ripe to form a rival group to up the pressure a little more. His occasion came at the behest of

³⁵³ Ibid, 146-7.

³⁵⁴ Ibid, 147.

Morocco, who invited Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Egypt, the GPRA, and Libya for talks days after the new year in 1961 to discuss the mounting issues they faced together in Africa, namely the Mauritanian Question, the French War in Algeria, and French Nuclear Testing.³⁵⁵

The Casablanca Summit of January 1961 and the Founding of the Casablanca Charter

During the first week of 1961, government delegations of Egypt, Ghana, Mali, Guinea, Algeria (GPRA), and Libya assembled in Casablanca for a summit to form a common front in African affairs. A number of decisions and resolutions were taken at the summit which affirms the positions of these states in African affairs during 1960-1, and that the clear thread binding all of them were their opposition to France. The political document issued and signed by the Conference, the Charter of Casablanca, declared the signatories' complete dedication to the liberation of the whole of Africa "and to achieve its unity."³⁵⁶ Somewhat puzzling was the Charter's support for its states' rights "to safeguard our hard won independence, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our States." Ghana, Egypt, Mali, and Morocco had a radically different interpretation of these words compared to their African counterparts in the Monrovia Group and the UAM because the former could be charged with such violations. So what then, was their interpretation of these words? It is thus very likely that the Casablanca Charter was sending a message from its signatories to the outer world that the African states were still in danger of intrusion by imperial powers.³⁵⁷ Naturally, by invoking the spectre of the imperialist powers, this was designed to hide the fact they were doing the exact same. The Resolutions of the conference were unsurprising and were veiled messages to the other African states not attending and were designed to further the specific interests of the signatories: the six signatories denounced French nuclear testing in Africa, declared that any aid given to France in its conflict with Algeria was a crime committed against Africa, and they called on all African states to provide material aid to the Algerian resistance (including guerrillas).³⁵⁸ Mauritania was also declared by the conference resolutions as a part of historical Morocco and should therefore go back to its motherland. According to the resolutions, Mauritania an illegitimate "puppet state" designed to allow the French imperialist state to encircle the free African states with its satellites. The Casablanca

³⁵⁵ "GP/215. CO/AF/L. 22nd December, 1960." RG 17/1/239. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

³⁵⁶ "109. Charter of Casablanca." RG 17/1/239. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

states added that these were an existential threat to the continent because “the increase in the number of artificial States in Africa is a permanent threat to the security of the African Continent, and, at the same time, a strengthening of the forces of imperialism.” In a bold move by Nasser, he introduced and received backing for a resolution decrying Israel as an imperialist danger to the developing world and called for “the necessity to have a just solution to this problem in conformity with the United Nations resolutions and the Asian-African Resolutions of Bandung to restore to the Arabs of Palestine all their legitimate rights.”³⁵⁹

As the meetings adjourned, Nkrumah rose defiantly to give his final address after being impressed by the meeting of minds that week. He claimed that the conference launched “a revolutionary challenge to the colonial powers and indeed the whole world in relation to its attitude towards Africa,” and considered it the only proper steppingstone to African unity. He was happy to see that the leaders who assembled for the conference “demonstrated unmistakably to the whole world in various ways their iron opposition to colonialism and imperialism and their granite resolve to liquidate these evils from the face of our beloved continent.”³⁶⁰ Not disguising why he had attended the talks, he (mis)spoke for the rest and claimed he was pleased that they all agreed that “All over Africa artificial boundaries dividing brother from brother, sister from sister, have been erected by the colonisers. It is within the greater context of African Union that these artificial boundaries imposed by colonialism and imperialism will disappear.”³⁶¹ While he could have correctly argued that all attendees did believe colonial borders were bogus and in need of revision, Nkrumah unfortunately interpreted their opinion to mean that they also wished to see the eventual founding of a single African state, the United States of Africa.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ “No. 2. Address by Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, President of the Republic of Ghana at the Closing Session of the Casablanca Conference on Saturday, 7th January, 1961.” RG 17/1/239. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

Chapter IV: Senegal's Foreign Policy, From Dreams of Unity to Staunch Defence of Sovereignty

The story of Senegal's foreign policy is different than that of Egypt and Ghana. Not only did Senegal begin its independence later than the others and it was also deeply affected by the very acrimonious collapse of a hasty federation with another former French colony, French Soudan. Much like Nasser in Egypt, Senghor was also very affected by domestic politics and this forced him to adopt a foreign policy orientation to insulate him from potential challenges to his rule. Although a strong domestic challenge from a younger and more radical Senegalese generation did affect him, his main goal for Senegal never changed. Senghor was a Francophile and great believer that if Senegal were to succeed and prosper in the future, a strong French partnership needed to be secured. Senegal, just as the other ex-AOF states, were the late comers to African affairs and last actors to enter the African Scramble for Africa when then gained their independence in 1960. France's grip on its West African colonies (a collection of territories it called *Afrique Occidentale Française* or AOF) and these colonies' long history of interaction with one another explain why their leaders were preoccupied more with negotiating with the French and with one another than wider African affairs until they gained their independence. Absent from the important African conferences of 1958-1959, they were neither asked to be consulted, nor talked about by the other African states. Thus, until their independence in 1960 they had much less influence in altering the course of inter-African affairs compared to Ghana and Egypt who had a head start.

Despite being late to join the race for African influence, Léopold Senghor was decisive in changing the course of African politics by creating a well-organised and cohesive alternative bloc against the ideas and behaviour of Nasser and Nkrumah from 1960 onwards. He may have started in regional relations with ideas of uniting under one great federation in the late 1950s, but at the head of a group of states formed together at Monrovia in May 1961, he successfully lobbied the others and convinced them to come together and codify a set of rules for the conduct of relations between African states. This important code of conduct, based on the central idea that a state's power of choice over its future and its total sovereignty over its territory, was tantamount with respect for one's newly claimed independence and sacrosanct. This code of

conduct, Senghor' solution to the potential and real problems facing African affairs, was a reflection of his troubled experience during Senegal's short time in the Mali Federation of 1959-1960. Dealing with domestic trouble stirred by his foreign counterpart in the Mali Federation and his hotly debated choice – both at home and abroad – to turn to France for help after independence rather than turn its back on it.

Documents showing Senghor's views on the foreign affairs of Senegal, the Mali Federation, and inter-African affairs in the 1950s are very scant, and very few examples were found in the Senegalese National Archives. Perhaps the most plausible explanation is that Senghor conceived of foreign affairs at the time in terms of his relations with France and the other ex-AOF territories as they established a new cooperative agreement leading to independence (which de Gaulle named *la Communauté*) in the fall of 1958. The little that does emerge comes from documents and addresses by Senghor to the constitutive congress of the new umbrella political party of the Mali Federation, the *Parti de Fédération Africaine* or PFA, in the summer of 1959. These documents are not foreign policy documents *per se* but amount to a sort of a combination of political manifesto on the building of an ideal African state and a set of red lines on acceptable political behaviour between the two in the federation that should never be crossed by the Soudanese leadership. At first glance these documents might seem too focused on domestic politics to be related to foreign affairs. Yet the formation of the Mali Federation was an act born out of foreign affairs, and it held an important implication for inter-African affairs because it was specifically designed to attract more African states to join it. As the sources dated after the breakup of the Federation in the summer of 1960, it becomes clear that Senghor saw domestic politics and foreign affairs as deeply interwoven. Part of the reasons for Senghor's growing interest in foreign affairs from 1960 onwards is due to the fact that Senegal became independent and had to make its position known in foreign affairs. Most important, however, is the documentation showing just how much the dreadful experience during the breakup of the federation became the influence behind the tone and direction Senghor undertook in African affairs. Most of these documents were found in collected works which emerged in the months following the breakup of the Mali Federation as Senghor and his second-hand man, Mamadou

Dia, scrambled to justify Senegal's actions as well as level charges that the Soudanese leadership led by Modibo Keita was responsible for causing the split by having attempted a coup.³⁶²

Senghor and Senegal: Domestic Constraints and Regionalism, 1954-1959

Senghor's personal goals and hopes for his territory, first articulated when he entered French National Assembly in 1945, would go on to structure his ideas of Senegal's foreign policy until 1960. The goals of his struggle was to force the French Government to recognise the equality of rights, (including citizenship and the blanket extension of the Declaration of Human Rights) to all individuals in the French Empire.³⁶³ Furthermore, he advocated for political reforms in Africa to democratise the entirety of France's empire, as well as the creation of a wide variety of French-funded programs to raise the quality of life of Africans.³⁶⁴ These goals were first articulated in the framework of a foreign policy in October 1954 in an article entitled '*Politique Étrangère*'. Until 1960, his thought was constrained by the regionalist dynamics in the French Empire.³⁶⁵ Senghor is not unlike the other African political leaders at the time in having a limited focus on his own region, as he paid little attention to future relations with the Anglo-African territories or the Arab World. Unlike others, however, Senghor remained steadfast in his commitment to maintain a tie with France. The most pressing concern for Senghor was finding a way to stymie the intra-African rivalry eating away at the AOF between Senegal and the Ivory Coast which was costing valuable pressure to put on the French to concede more rights to Africans. Senghor believed that the Franco-West African territories could cluster into two groups to be integrated into a French Federal Republic: one with a capital and parliament in Dakar that would represent Senegal's allies French Soudan, Guinea, and Mauritania, and the other with a capital and parliament in Abidjan representing Ivory Coast's allies Niger, Dahomey, and Upper Volta. These clusters, he argued, could be politically and economically viable as each already

³⁶² "Avant-Propos," in Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Nation et Voie Africaine du Socialisme* (Paris: Éditions Présence Africaine, 1961), 7-11, and Ministère de l'Information, de la Presse et de la Radiodiffusion, *Livre Blanc sur le Coup d'État manqué du 19 au 20 août 1960 et la Proclamation de l'Indépendance du Sénégal* (Dakar: République du Sénégal, 1960).

³⁶³ Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), and Anna Konieczna, "Léopold Sédar Senghor: Du rêve de l'unité aux réalités de l'indépendance," in Philippe Oulmont and Maurice Vaisse, *De Gaulle et la décolonisation de l'Afrique subsaharienne* (Paris: Karthala, 2018), 106.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ William Foltz, *From French West Africa to the Mali Federation*, 66.

had considerable economic ties to one another.³⁶⁶ The coming together of territories into federations was an important idea for Senghor because he believed once they did they could finally have the leverage against the French to concede rights and accelerate their development.³⁶⁷ Senghor's dedication to the idea of federation reflected his worldview in the 1950s. For Senghor, there simply was no other viable alternative for African states to take. If the territories fractured into separate independent states they would undoubtedly be economically divided, weak, and leave the continent prone to internal conflict. Senghor saw the post-war world around him form into large political units with integrated economies and argued that Africa should be no different.³⁶⁸ As the 1950s unfurled and more African states became independent, Senghor naturally found his opinion increasingly under fire. In the late 1950s, he had to argue that a federation within a French confederation was not at all contradictory to African aspirations of independence because it would satisfy both African and French aspirations. Both were not only historically tied to one another economically and politically, but also needed each other for support to succeed in integrating the post-war world. Thus, a truly independent African federation inside a confederation with France would satisfy both the Africans' need for their own autonomy and French desire for continued economic ties with Africa.³⁶⁹

One of Senghor's most contentious opinions was that independence had to be achieved in a series of steps – in other words, independence should be a progressive ideal rather than a hasty one.³⁷⁰ This opinion was unsurprisingly contentious because it echoed the hated colonial narrative espoused for so many years that only when the Africans were sufficiently ready could they begin to gain some control over their own affairs. Calls for immediate independence and for the total 'Africanisation' of the territorial governments were very popular because they were believed to be a way to deliver the people from colonialism. Senghor, however, argued that taking such a course was premature and that guidance from French bureaucrats and technicians was still needed until African cadres obtained sufficient knowledge in handling the affairs of state and for the state to be sufficiently developed industrially and economically before declaring

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Anna Konieczna, "Léopold Sédar Senghor: Du rêve de l'unité aux réalités de l'indépendance," 107.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ Ibid, 108, 113.

independence.³⁷¹ For Senghor, purging the territorial governments of French technicians was similar to flying blind, and Senegal would be required, he estimated, at least twenty more years of Franco-African cooperation to ensure a successful start to independence.³⁷² In the summer and fall of 1958, as de Gaulle announced a referendum for the African colonies to establish a renewed relationship with the metropole (*la Communauté*) with a promise of eventual independence, Senghor was forced by elements in his own party to concede and compromise. At a meeting of the UPS, Mamadou Dia, the old stalwart of the Senegalese socialists, promised that his supporters in the UPS would not vote in favour of de Gaulle's referendum and fracture the party if Senghor held to this twenty-year timeline for independence. Senghor's favoured long-term approach to independence was simply untenable because the Senegalese public was becoming more and more influenced by ideas and stories of other states' independence in the region. Furthermore, a lengthy stay of French officials would undoubtedly cause the population to contest France's continued presence. Facing a disintegration of his party, Senghor acquiesced and promised that they would seek independence after five years. Despite severe protests organised by the *Parti Africain de l'Indépendance* (PAI) and other youth movements during de Gaulle's visit to Dakar to promote the referendum, the Senegalese jumped on board with Senghor and the UPS and voted to remain in close association with France as long as independence would result.³⁷³

Nothing came of Senghor's early idea of federations he had in 1954, but it is instructive because it brings to light two important constants underpinning Senegal's foreign policy goals until 1960: forging a federation with other AOF territories, while improving its status and close relationship with France. These two goals culminated in the creation of the Mali Federation with French Soudan in 1959-60, and its dissolution soon afterward did not deter Senghor at all from pursuing these goals. Sure, the substance of these goals changed – like abandoning the idea of unity by federation – but the form did not as Senegal pressed on with creating another form of unity built on economic and political cooperation with former AOF territories and France. Whilst his struggle went against the grain of the French Empire, he never entertained any ideas that would lead to a rupture with France as he always believed that Senegal's successful future

³⁷¹ Ibid, 108, and Léopold Senghor, "Congrès Constitutif du P.F.A.: Débats. Dakar, les 1er 2 et 3 juillet 1959." Folder 172, Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963), ANS.

³⁷² Anna Konieczna, "Léopold Sédar Senghor: Du rêve de l'unité aux réalités de l'indépendance," 113.

³⁷³ Ibid, 108, 113.

development was tied to the metropole. So why the incredible dedication given by the Senegalese leadership to these goals? These goals, simply put, made up the solution devised by the leadership in a strategy to cope with a significant internal problem threatening their rule – the unrelenting pressure of Senegal’s domestic politics.

An important limiting factor for Senghor’s foreign policy was rooted in domestic politics: the emergence of a generational divide in 1953 which only grew worse as the years went on. Unlike the French university-trained generation of Senghor, the new generation of African university students were very radical. Ideas of ‘unity’ were often touted in all segments of Senegalese society, but unlike Senghor and his generation, what the younger generation meant was attracting other African territories to join in a wide anti-colonial struggle to secure a complete independence from France. For many youth in the country, their idea of unity meant political unity by abolishing borders.³⁷⁴ Thus, it was unsurprising that they idolised leaders like Guinea’s Sékou Touré and French Soudan’s Modibo Keita, and therefore favoured their inter-territorial political parties like the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (RDA) over territorial ones like Senghor and Dia’s political parties (the BPS and UDS which later merged to form the *Union Progressiste Sénégalaise*, or UPS).³⁷⁵ Some of the younger students in Senegal also formed a new party, the PAI, which clamored for immediately severing ties with France to secure Senegal’s independence.³⁷⁶ The up-and-coming generation of political actors were therefore a potential destabilising force to Senghor’s generation who came to power and gotten their jobs under the auspices of the French.³⁷⁷ The popular support for Senghor and the UPS highlighted another divide; Senghor’s power base was firmly entrenched in the countryside and he lacked the important support of urbanites, who were more radical and inclined to support younger politicians.³⁷⁸ Senghor understood that if he were successful in retaining the leadership of Senegal, gather a mass following, and fulfil his vision for its future he needed to find a balance between his party’s aspirations and the radical young generation. Compromises and skilful manoeuvring were needed to attract Senegal’s youth into the fold of his party.

³⁷⁴ Ibid, 67.

³⁷⁵ Ibid, 70-1, and Ruth Morgenthau, *Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 311.

³⁷⁶ William Foltz, *From French West Africa to the Mali Federation*, 82.

³⁷⁷ Ibid, 88.

³⁷⁸ Ibid, 71-2.

To solve the dilemma, Senghor came up with an ingenious idea. Throughout the second half of the 1950s, he became a strong backer of the idea of a ‘federation’ without properly giving it a total definition. Senghor’s position was sufficiently vague – he stated that federalism meant safeguarding an African personality with some sort of association with France.³⁷⁹ Leaving this important term purposefully imprecise allowed Senegalese people, especially its more radical elements, to believe Senghor agreed with their own precise definition. Thus, the term ‘federalism’ was accepted by both spectrums of Senegalese society in contradictory fashion – for some, federalism was the means to incorporate the AOF territories as equals in the French Republic. For the others, federalism was believed to be the means to unite the African territories against French colonialism and to ultimately find independence. Senghor therefore used the term ‘federation’ as an important rhetorical tool to rally some support from a seemingly centrist position.³⁸⁰ In January and February 1957 Senghor bolstered his position with the more radical youth by again catering to a vague and contestable term they often used. Senghor confronted the youth at conferences and shaped his narrative as the staunch defender of ‘African unity’ and adopted a new slogan: “the African Community before the Franco-African Community.” Lastly, he called on other Senegalese parties to join his own because he promised it would continue to engage in the struggle against colonialism. Ultimately, this helped him gather more support from the younger generation to win the important Senegalese territorial election in March 1957.³⁸¹ The win did afford much breathing room to give the opportunity to centralise his party’s power in Senegal, but the internal problems were hardly fixed.³⁸² Domestic pressure forced Senghor to promise to pursue a form of unity; not only did it restrict his options for the future, it also ensured that his problem with the politics of the younger generation would re-emerge later.

From 1957 to 1959, Senghor was one of the chief advocates of a union with other French African territories and he tried to attract the other AOF leaders to join him. In Senghor’s mind, coming together as a larger unit would allow a better integration into a confederation with France because they could leverage more concessions out of the metropole.³⁸³ Furthermore, many

³⁷⁹ Ibid, 68.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Ibid, 78, 80.

³⁸² Ruth Morgenthau demonstrated that the 1957 elections were very important as every AOF leader kept power from then onwards and centralised their power. See, Ruth Morgenthau, *Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa*, 312.

³⁸³ Anna Konieczna, “Léopold Sédar Senghor: Du rêve de l’unité aux réalités de l’indépendance,” 106-7.

territories were facing economic problems if they went out on their own. If they combined, however, they could solve issues more easily. While Senghor's idea of unity did seem enticing, convincing the other territorial leaders to come together was a long shot. Throughout their history in France's empire, many other territorial leaders were jealous of Senegal's privileged status within the AOF structure, which made them suspicious that the new federation would favor Senegal. Furthermore, the Ivory Coast, the most prosperous of the AOF territories, resented any form of arrangement where they would be expected to share any of their resources.³⁸⁴ Every other territorial leader refused to entertain the idea, except one, Modibo Keita of the neighbouring territory of French Soudan. Senghor and Keita both agreed to form a new umbrella political party, the *Parti de la Fédération Africaine* (PFA) to organise and build the new Federation of Mali. In 1959 and early 1960, Senghor never gave up on the idea of attracting other ex-AOF territories into joining the federation. Not only did the federation fail to draw any interest from the other ex-AOF leaders, Senghor's souring relations with Keita because of incompatible views on federation during the building of the Mali Federation laid the groundwork for his continental policy from 1960-3.

Creating Unity: Senghor, the PFA, and the New State

At the constitutive congress of the PFA on 1 July 1959, Senghor delivered a report that precisely stated his and his party's stand on the structure of the coming federation and its starting point in foreign affairs. Unbeknown to some in the audience, notably his counterpart, Modibo Keita, Senghor was completely inflexible on his views, and this report functioned as a set of red lines not to be crossed by the Soudanese in the coming federation. In the report, he states explicitly that aim of the Federation was to go beyond what divided the Senegalese and Soudanese and to look towards what united them and to build – step by step – a federated state and “negro-African nation”, with French as the language, and freely associated with France within a confederation.³⁸⁵ The most important part of this first point – and something that would never change in Senghor's mind – was the absolute necessity of maintaining a tight relationship with France despite the fact that they had been responsible for their poor situation. For Senghor, a very close relationship with their former colonial power was necessary to help their countries

³⁸⁴ Ruth Morgenthau, *Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa*, 306-7, 321.

³⁸⁵ “Rapport sur la Doctrine et le Programme du Parti,” reprinted in Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Nation et Voie Africaine du Socialisme* (Paris: Éditions Présence Africaine, 1961), 15, 22.

overcome their “millennial backwardness.”³⁸⁶ Senghor understood that at that current time in African affairs this argument was contentious both with his own population and the rest of the continent, and he addressed the issue. The federation would indeed respect its “terroir” and value the growth of organic political, economic, and cultural institutions that reflected their land, their race, and their history. In a stab to other states on their continent, Senghor was firm that refusing the help of their former colonial overlords in the name of an “anti-colonial struggle” would place severe roadblocks on their countries’ road to development.³⁸⁷ Most importantly, Senghor linked this choice with the prized idea of independence, and he saw opting for a position of ‘refusal’ to join with Europe meant undermining it. For Senghor, the idea of “independence is not grounded in refusing; it is [grounded in the ability] to choose. To choose the goal, to choose the means – in function to our current situation.”³⁸⁸ Senghor was truly throwing his hat in the ring of Africa’s debate on the meaning of independence, and responding to the call of other leaders (like Nasser and Nkrumah) to leave the colonial powers behind altogether and arguing that the crux of the argument and meaning of independence lay elsewhere. What made a country truly independent, in other words, was its capability to choose for itself the goals and means in order to shape its destiny. For Senghor, bowing to the pressure exerted by other African leaders was tantamount to following a trend without proper reflection.

Senghor’s address at the assembly in July 1959 was a very strong message and a signal. Not only was it meant to instruct and warn his Soudanese colleagues, but also to signal his domestic opposition and other African states of this position. After all, he did state that the upcoming federation between Senegal and French Soudan was designed to attract other African states to join.³⁸⁹ Yet where did his insistence on maintaining a tight relationship with France and his idea of a country wielding its own individual choice by properly reflecting on its own particular situation come from? Perhaps the most obvious part of the reason behind his position was the fact that Senghor was an ardent Francophile and genuinely wanted to see Senegal’s future tied to that of France. The Senegalese leader did have a large amount of personal affinity with France and he had lived a significant part of his life in France, married a French woman,

³⁸⁶ Ibid, 17. Senghor did espouse a rather typical orientalist view of his own country and peoples, and he used typical orientalist language like the passage I quoted above.

³⁸⁷ Ibid, 16-7.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Ibid, 27.

was a Catholic, had become an important man of letters there and an admirer of its culture. There were more important reasons behind his position, however. The alternative position of breaking all links with colonial powers, espoused by the likes of Nkrumah, Nasser, and Senegal's problematic PAI was gaining a lot of popularity domestically in Senegal, particularly with its younger generation.³⁹⁰ Senghor argued that his desire for continued good relations with France was reasoned because he had carefully considered Senegal's and French Soudan's own specific situations and urged others to do the same. Senghor believed that if they did, they would come to the same conclusion because they would undoubtedly be reminded of a particular *cause célèbre* from the ex-AOF and its hardships for not doing so.

Senghor explicitly reminded the congress of Guinea's hasty decision to opt out of a continued close relationship with France in October 1958 and its negative effects. Senghor warned the congress not to listen to the PAI's dubious calls of immediate independence because they had not travelled to Guinea to see for themselves the deep trouble it found itself in.³⁹¹ Bowing to pressure from his party and the aspirations of a younger and more radicalised generation, Sékou Touré had turned down the French offer to join *la Communauté* and declared Guinea's immediate independence.³⁹² Touré paid a higher price than he imagined for the move however, as a vengeful de Gaulle made an example of Guinea and punished it severely. Under his orders, the French officials either took out or sabotaged whatever was left of the infrastructure it had built, leaving the new state without a leg to stand on and with very few options from which to find aid.³⁹³ Senghor knew that the appeal of independence was strong with the youth of his country, but as the case of Guinea was instructing them, turning their backs to the French in a show of anti-colonialism was simply too costly an option.

At the time Senghor delivered this report, Guinea found itself deeply isolated, poor, and forced to solicit any state it could for any form of funding. Ghana did jump on the chance to gain good publicity and a measure of influence by ceremoniously handing Touré a 10-million-pound loan, but it was hardly enough to build a country from scratch. The Cold War superpowers were

³⁹⁰ "Congrès Constitutif du P.F.A.: Débats. Dakar, les 1er 2 et 3 juillet 1959." Folder 172, Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963), ANS.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007), 135, 143-4.

³⁹³ Ibid, 152, 172-3.

also implored to help, but only meagre bits of emergency aid like foodstuffs made it to Guinea.³⁹⁴ For Senghor, it would take more than an upstart and very limited industrial sector in Senegal and the natural resources of French Soudan to make a viable state able to fill the expectations of their peoples. To do so, Senghor needed a proper plan for the federation's development before taking any hasty decisions.³⁹⁵ Immediate independence and the cutting of ties with Europe was simply not the answer, because it needed access to European experts, funds, and markets; France was therefore their ticket to the European Economic Community (EEC) and the West.³⁹⁶ Senghor argued that it was in France's interests to help the federation achieve its goals, as de Gaulle knew that a rival union had emerged in Africa, the Ghana-Guinea union, which threatened to draw lone African nations away into their orbit and away from Europe. De Gaulle, he added, was a sensible and reasonable man and the federation could very well negotiate with him and achieve success.³⁹⁷ Senghor was not the only Senegalese leader at the congress to give these opinions. Mamadou Dia, Senghor's right-hand man in the UPS and who would become the federation's Vice-President, stated the same points and defended Senghor in the debates at the congress.³⁹⁸ Senegal's position on the direction and future of the Mali Federation was therefore clearly laid down.

Senghor reiterated that the aim of this federation was to attract other African countries to join them. He did not envisage this federation to be all inclusive, however, as he only meant that only former states of the ex-AOF would join, thus excluding Anglo-African and Arab countries. This would change two years later at the Monrovia Conference, but Senghor's assertion shows the fact that he had been for years constrained by the politics of France and the AOF and simply had not yet considered the regions of Africa outside of it. What Senghor really cared about was rebuilding the fractured AOF but instead of allowing France to continue its rule over the Africans, the new federation would be on a more equal footing with it inside the framework of a

³⁹⁴ Sergey Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956-1964* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010), 63-6.

³⁹⁵ "Congrès Constitutif du P.F.A.: Débats. Dakar, les 1er 2 et 3 juillet 1959." Folder 172, Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963), ANS.

³⁹⁶ "Rapport sur la Doctrine et le Programme du Parti," reprinted in Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Nation et Voie Africaine du Socialisme*, 37.

³⁹⁷ Ibid, 27.

³⁹⁸ "Congrès Constitutif du P.F.A.: Débats. Dakar, les 1er 2 et 3 juillet 1959." Folder 172, Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963), ANS, and "Déclaration d'investiture. Faite par M. Mamdou Dia devant l'Assemblée Législative du Sénégal, à Dakar le 4 avril 1959," Folder 172, Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963), ANS.

confederation.³⁹⁹ This shows that even in the summer of 1959 Senghor still held on to the idea he had fought so hard for to gain France's acceptance that Africans were indeed equal and that Africans and French working together was the best way for them to improve both their futures. So how did Senghor imagine the Mali Federation attracting other former AOF states to join?

To attract them, he argued, they needed to build a federation based on an ideal African state. Senghor elaborated on this concept of the state at length and was very clear about that they would not build institutions from scratch but instead add an African character to the best contributions that the Europeans had brought.⁴⁰⁰ At the base of Senghor's concept for an ideal state was the notion that there were many different peoples populating the numerous countries of the ex-AOF and that each, when it respected and represented a country's diversity, was much better off because all groups brought vital contributions. This was no doubt influenced by the fact that Senghor himself was part of a religious and ethnic minority in Senegal – he was a Roman Catholic and born in the Serer community. A 'nation' as he defined it, was not a reflection of a narrow segment of society (like an ethnic or religious minority/majority), but was instead a constructed supra-national identity which reflected and included all societal groups. National strength, for Senghor, was to be found in the richness of diversity and a "harmonious ensemble", not in a forced homogeneity.⁴⁰¹ The 'state', as he defined it, had to be a reflection of the nation-in-the-making and the expression of its will, but in order to do so, its agents (parliaments, politicians, civil servants) had the task of constructing the new supra-national identity which would erect the nation.⁴⁰² Institutions would therefore be designed in a way that the individuals had to engage with them; once they did, the different individuals would be formed into a "negro-African Nation", therefore adding an African dimension to the supra-national identity. Thus, it would "assure a cultural base to the future Nation, by defining the essential characteristics of the traditional negro-African civilisation with the contributions of the French and European which will permit a renaissance."⁴⁰³ Naturally, 'forming' individuals into a collective was necessarily a coercive business, and Senghor alluded to the fact that a temporary dictatorship was necessary. He claimed that the new state simply could not have limited powers

³⁹⁹ Ibid, 15, 117.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid, 17.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid, 22-3, 25.

⁴⁰² Ibid, 23-4, 41.

⁴⁰³ Ibid, 41.

because this process had to be carried out; only when it was complete could a program limiting the powers of the state be implemented.⁴⁰⁴ Senghor never openly alluded to the true role of the new party in the address, but it was amply clear that it would fulfill the role of the vanguard and work glove-in-hand with the state in erecting the nation.⁴⁰⁵ The state (and by extension, the party) was to assure the suppression of two forces inherent in all nations, the forces of assimilation and imperialism.⁴⁰⁶ The two forces were connected for Senghor; the first was the unwanted process of domestic homogenisation that menaced the diversity he prized, but he also saw it as the precursor of its exportation abroad and the enforced homogenisation of peoples of other nations. Interestingly, he left the idea open to suggestion that while it most certainly applied previously to colonial powers, it was also applicable to African countries. Senghor's solution to keep these forces in check was the idea of a decentralised federation, whereby all nations were respected within, and to accept incoming peoples to this federation on an equal footing and in mutual respect.⁴⁰⁷ Senghor acknowledged the economic problem of the ex-AOF, namely the economic inequalities of its former territories, and urged them to enter their decentralised Mali Federation – which he claimed had no “leader state” – and to knock down the useless trade barriers and customs duties harming their development. Instead, it was much wiser to form their own version of the EEC.⁴⁰⁸

Naturally, given this arrangement between the party and the state in erecting the nation, Senghor clearly stated that an organised opposition would be tolerated as long it abided by a set of very important rules. In this respect Senegal was in no way different than Ghana and Egypt. An opposition could exist as long as it left the party carry out its work, and it could not be allowed to criticize the party in the interest of a single group in society nor could it have an aim to destroy the party because it meant the destruction of the state itself.⁴⁰⁹ Senghor was determined to make it difficult for an opposition to thrive because he was acutely aware of the potential for an opposition to undermine the building of the federation and the party's hold on

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵ Senghor never believed that democracy and the idea of using a vanguard party with hardly any tolerable opposition was contradictory – in fact, he claimed that his ideas were reinforcing democratic principles. It was also uncanny that Senghor deplored the USSR and its political system in his address and yet was incredibly inspired by the idea of a vanguard party working hand in glove with the state. See, *ibid*, 75-6.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 24.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 25.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 28, 31.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 76.

power. Finally, Senghor addressed the problematic generational political divide in Senegal and explained that it was essential for the entire population to be behind the policies of nation's political leadership for the federation to succeed. Where Senegal differed from the others was its problems with an up and coming generation of politicians. It was therefore particularly important for students, who were prone to be misled by European ideologies, to understand that their role was not to lead but to assimilate the masses behind their national leaders who espoused proper theories fit for a 'negro-African' civilisation. Interestingly, Senghor added that the federation's students were to take their North African counterparts as an example in backing the leadership.⁴¹⁰ What he did not yet comprehend is the implications – and threat – that a domestic opposition had in the federation's (and later Senegal's) foreign affairs. It was the realisation that foreign countries and nationals could inflict domestic strife in another country by supporting its domestic opposition that drove Senghor to be the strongest supporter of the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other states and the total respect for a state's territorial sovereignty.

Instead of listening to Senghor's instructions, the federation's youth criticized the PFA leadership for their links to France and espoused a similar discourse to Nasser and Nkrumah. The following spring, as the youth of the PFA gathered for their first political conference, Senghor prepared to address them by writing "an essay of definition" entitled *The African Path to Socialism* in order to bring them back in line and justify his position. Senghor believed that their idea of cutting off ties to Europe was based on faulty grounds. He argued that at the crux of the matter was a great deal of confusion on the continent about what colonialism had been. His first message was clear: African people should cease making both 'colonialism' and Europe the alibi for the current situation of Africa and all its problems because it would never lead to any progress, and in any case it was lazy and demonstrated an inferiority complex.⁴¹¹ While colonialism brought a good deal of harmful consequences like slavery and oppression, it had not been a purely destructive force. Colonialism brought with it some good which could not be ignored, notably engineering, the sciences, and religion.⁴¹²

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ "La voie africaine du socialisme (essai de definition)," reprinted in Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Nation et Voie Africaine du Socialisme*, 108-9.

⁴¹² Ibid, 110.

The Dissolution of the Mali Federation: Setting Precedents and Contrasting African Opinions

The formation of the Federation of Mali in 1959 was held as a triumph for both the Senegalese and the Soudanese leaderships. Both saw it as a meaningful step towards African unity and independence which greatly pleased their populations and sealed their position atop their own hierarchies. Trouble was on a very short horizon, however, as their interaction within the new federation highlighted that they had failed to consider each others' assumptions underpinning this venture. Both Senghor and Keita formed the federation as a response to their particular domestic constraints – for Senghor, it was a project towards African unity designed to pave the way to eventual independence and force France to concede rights to the Africans, and for Keita, a federation was the first step to African unity which would bring the long-awaited independence to the Soudanese. These goals did seem like they dovetailed nicely, but as the first few months came and went, the federation began to unravel because both the Senegalese and Soudanese tugged in different directions until the federation fractured in August 1960. The roots of the split of the Mali Federation were situated in two contrasting understandings held in the Senegalese and Soudanese camps: the idea of 'federalism' and how it should take its final form, and the federation's continued relationship with France.⁴¹³ Up to late 1958, Modibo Keita was still supportive of securing a good relationship with France (as long as it would allow the federation's independence), but he was increasingly going against the grain of his own party. Not only was the youth wing of the *Union Soudanaise* (US) pushing for an immediate independence, but so were prominent members like Modibo Keita.⁴¹⁴ Compared with the Senegalese, there was much less unity in the ranks of the party around the issue of cooperation with France, for an important reason. On the whole, the Soudanese had been treated much worse by the French during the colonial period and a significant portion of the US (as well as trade unions and youth organisations) were openly hostile to the continued relationship with France.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹³ William Foltz, *From French West Africa to the Mali Federation*, 144-5, 158, 168, 173, and Vincent Joly, "Du Soudan français à la République du Mali: Une indépendance dans la douleur (1956-1961)," in Philippe Oulmont and Maurice Vaisse, *De Gaulle et la décolonisation de l'Afrique subsaharienne* (Paris: Karthala, 2018), 155, 157-9, 161, 171.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid, 157-8.

⁴¹⁵ William Foltz, *From French West Africa to the Mali Federation*, 144-5, Vincent Joly, "Du Soudan français à la République du Mali: Une indépendance dans la douleur (1956-1961)," 161.

In late 1959 and early 1960, a combination of pressure from the US and from continued French recklessness on the continent put additional pressure on Modibo Keita. With no warning from the French, their military conducted indiscriminate sweeps in the north for Algerian and other militants, news of French covert plans to conserve French Soudan's northern regions for themselves, and finally, the first surprise nuclear test north of French Soudan's border with Algeria, Keita finally understood the French could not be trusted partners in cooperation.⁴¹⁶ Thus, he began to demand a renegotiation of the federation's partnership with France of his surprised Senegalese counterparts. A few months later, without consulting the Senegalese, he publicly announced the Federation would seek to create an African monetary zone outside of the French Franc.⁴¹⁷

Not only was Keita trampling over Senghor's inflexible ideal of maintaining a tight relationship with France, Keita was also breaching one of the core tenets of the Mali Federation by supplanting the careful power sharing agreement between Senegal and French Soudan established in 1959. In its original design, a balance of power existed in the Federation to respect the national sovereignty of each and to prevent one from overcoming the other on the federal level. For Senghor and Dia this arrangement was necessary for them to be able to maintain control domestically by staying at the top of the intricate politics of the UPS (by then an amalgamation of many parties). This agreement, however, became a large point of contention for Modibo Keita who believed that supreme power needed to be possessed by one office in order to see the federation progress.⁴¹⁸ With an election for the presidency of the Mali Federation coming up later in the year, Keita began that summer to intrude directly in Senegal's internal affairs, and as he did so, Senghor increasingly saw a drop in his chances of being able to upend Keita's authoritarianism by winning the upcoming election for the presidency.⁴¹⁹ In a UPS congress in July 1960, Senghor addressed his party members and announced that the French technicians already working in Senegal would not be replaced by Africans. The youth wing of the UPS disagreed strongly because it wanted to see an 'Africanisation' of cadres and a reduction of French influence. Modibo Keita, who attended the congress as an observer, stood up and joined the youth wing by castigating Senghor in front of his party and accused him of reneging on the

⁴¹⁶ Ibid, 159.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid, 173, 175.

⁴¹⁸ William Foltz, *From French West Africa to the Mali Federation*, 168.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, 171.

PFA's assurances that all cadres would be Africanised. Keita's intrusion at the congress alerted Senghor and Dia that Keita was a direct threat to their domestic position.⁴²⁰ This was not the only time the Soudanese had been intruding in Senegalese affairs. According to William Foltz, Soudanese figures were trying to undermine support for Senghor by meeting Muslim religious leaders and telling them that they would be better off with a Muslim leading them rather than Senghor, a Christian.⁴²¹ Keita pushed his luck more and more that summer and his plan to supplant Senegal's influence in the Mali Federation. Claiming he was justified to do so as provisional President of the Federation, he attempted to appoint a relative of one of Senghor's former domestic opponents, Lamine Gueye, as the head of the armed forces. Furthermore, the Soudanese ramped up their pressure on Senghor himself not to run for the federal elections.⁴²² The Senegalese leadership finally exited the Mali Federation in the nick of time in late August as Keita and the Soudanese leadership attempted to take key Senegalese institutions for themselves, and tried to convince the French to send troops to secure their takeover.⁴²³

Senegal in the wake of the break-up of the Mali Federation

The attempted coup of August 1960 by Keita to oust the Senegalese leadership and subsume Senegal into a centralised federation left Léopold Senghor very shaken and acutely aware of the potential threat to his rule and position in the country. Most unsettling was just how easily a foreign leader had been able to tap into Senegal's weakness, the combination of Senghor's large urban opposition and radical youth, and to try to turn it against the UPS-led Senegalese leadership. The project of the Mali Federation – sold to the Senegalese population as the way forward – was dead and left a large void in its wake. Senghor, Dia, and the rest of the UPS were left with only a temporary measure to keep Senegal moving forward. At the height of tensions with the Soudanese, Senegal immediately declared its independence – both as a measure to distance and insulate itself from the Mali Federation and to signal to the wider Senegalese public that they were not going back to French rule.⁴²⁴ A new project needed to be put together –

⁴²⁰ Ibid, 173-4.

⁴²¹ Ibid, 176.

⁴²² Ibid, 176, 178.

⁴²³ Ibid, 180-2.

⁴²⁴ Mamadou Dia immediately sent a request to the UN on August 20th asking the body to recognise their newly-declared independence and secured the vital recognition from the UN that later that day. See, "Pièce n. 30. Télégramme du Président Dia demandant l'admission du Sénégal à l'Organisation de Nations-Unies," and "Pièce n. 32. Télégramme du Président Dia à l'O.N.U. confirmant la demande d'admission du Sénégal à l'Organisation des

and quickly – by Senegal’s leadership to satisfy the intricacies of its society and convince them that they could lead it to a prosperous future.

One of Senghor and Dia’s first acts – within five days of the dissolution of the federation – was to write a new constitution for their new independent country to secure a permanent and virtually unchallengeable set of positions. Senghor’s influence on the document is incredibly evident: the preamble includes a passage showing his sentimental attachment to France as it states that Senegal declares its independence and belief in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen of 1789 as well as the UN declaration of 1948 (the constitution also stated that the official language was French). Senghor’s previous bargain with the younger generation is also enshrined in the preamble, which states that Senegal would spare no effort to create African unity (although tactically, it does not state which form this would take).⁴²⁵ The first section of the constitution, entitled ‘of the state and its sovereignty’ also shows Senghor’s beliefs in diversity as well as the harsh lessons he learned from the Mali Federation. The first article stipulates that the state is inclusive and protects the country’s diversity irrespective of religion, gender, and race, and article 3 allows political opposition groups to organise and challenge the party in power by way of suffrage and as long as they respect the law.⁴²⁶ Articles two through four are a showcase of the lessons Senghor drew from the break-up of the Mali Federation, laying the stress is on the state’s sovereignty over its territory and laws preventing domestic actors from undermining it. They stipulate that no individual or group other than the government was entitled to appropriate themselves and exercise the state’s sovereignty, that all political parties must respect the principle of Senegal’s national sovereignty, and that acting on “any regionalist propaganda which could harm the state’s internal security or the integrity of the territory of the Republic” was an offence punishable by law.⁴²⁷

The understanding and logic behind these stipulations is clear – that it was treasonous to wreck the balance of society and to become the channel through which a foreign state could undermine Senegal’s sovereignty. As Senghor experienced with the Soudanese leadership using

Nations Unies,” reprinted in Ministère de l’Information, de la Presse et de la Radiodiffusion, *Livre Blanc sur le Coup d’État manqué*, 66 and 67.

⁴²⁵ “Pièce n. 33. Constitution de la République du Sénégal (Loi n. 60-045, adoptée le 25 août 1960),” reprinted in Ministère de l’Information, de la Presse et de la Radiodiffusion, *Livre Blanc sur le Coup d’État manqué*, 68.

⁴²⁶ Ibid, 68-9.

⁴²⁷ Ibid, 69.

ethnic and party sympathisers in his own country to undermine him during the Mali Federation, it was important that the country's constitution clearly forbade it to happen again. Furthermore, the constitution clearly shows that in Senghor's mind, the Senegalese people had to be made to understand that their state had clearly defined borders, irrespective of ethnicity and religion, and that they had to be respected. No appeals to foreign politicians or states to intervene in Senegalese domestic politics was going to be tolerated. With this constitution clearly stating Senegal's sole right to its territorial sovereignty, Senghor sought to insulate himself from the combination of foreign and domestic threats. The borders that Senegal had acquired from the time of the French Empire had been violated by foreign leaders, and Senghor and Dia's successful defence of them now made them untouchable. From this point onwards in its dealings with other African states, Senegal would consistently affirm its rights to its sovereignty over its borders and nurture alliances with states that thought the same. As I demonstrate in chapter three, because of this belief, Senghor struck a very important alliance with Tunisia's Habib Bourguiba as they came to Mauritania's aid to fend off Morocco's spurious claims on its territorial sovereignty. It was over this issue that independent Africa began to fracture into two antagonistic camps, one which respected the former colonial borders and the other, headed by Nkrumah and Nasser who believed all borders should be redrawn or dissolved.

After the hasty adoption of Senegal's constitution in the late summer of 1960, both Senghor and Dia scrambled to write something as fast as they could to serve as a set of justifications for the split and to give the public some sort of vision of what was to come in the future. It is evident that both were caught on the back foot by the federation's implosion because their writings barely feature anything new and substantial. In both cases, they collated previous writings during the time of the Mali Federation to indicate that Senegal would not change its position.⁴²⁸ Senghor, however, was the only one of the two to submit anything new, written in a preface, which spanned a mere five pages. Yet in this hastily prepared preface⁴²⁹ he launched a new concept which, together with Senegal's constitution, formed the basis of Senegal's world view and foreign policy for the next few years – Senegal's duty to what he saw as the ongoing creation of a new world order during decolonisation, the 'Civilisation of the Universal'.⁴³⁰ This

⁴²⁸ "Avant-Propos," in Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Nation et Voie Africaine du Socialisme*, 7.

⁴²⁹ Ibid, 9.

⁴³⁰ Some examples through which Senghor improved the concept in the next few years include: Léopold Senghor, "Some Thoughts on Africa: A Continent in Development," *International Affairs*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (April 1962): 189-

concept, which Senghor elaborated more and more in 1961-2, was specifically designed to instruct the Senegalese people of their nation's new identity and give them their state's sense of purpose in international affairs. Furthermore, he saw it as an ideal and a project of inter-state socialisation in international relations between the decolonised states and the rest of the world with incredible benefits. It was anchored by a few assumptions around the dismissal of the radical anti-colonialism espoused on the continent: that their vast negro-African/Berber values were able to contribute hugely and positively to build a better world community; that they needed to purge of harmful elements of this civilisation keeping them back as a people; that it was imperative that people of negro-African/Berber values had to understand that they should appropriate themselves with some European ones to be able to merge with the rest of the world as well as improve their own situation; and finally, that if they accepted and acted on the above, Senegal would get a boost by being allowed to have a sustained relationship with the Europeans in their own efforts at development.⁴³¹

Reminiscent of his great work on the concept of *Négritude* which he had introduced in the past and a talk he had given in Europe in 1959, Senghor believed that the Senegalese people were made from a combination of negro-African and Berber values and the products of a specific *terroir* – of a particular climate, land, and “original cultural heritage.”⁴³² Yet the Senegalese people, by virtue of being a people of the twentieth century and itself a “socialising civilisation” invested in the future of the planet, had to find a way to combine its negro-Berber values with European values to fulfil its true destiny as a contributing force on the world stage. Colonialism, he argued, had not simply been a destructive force – with the destruction had come the introduction of positive European values which the Senegalese had to wield. They had to shed themselves of the worst and most negative values of their own civilisation and accept the good European ones because of they held the technical methods to propel them forward.⁴³³ By achieving the symbiosis of the best of their two civilisations, the Senegalese would be poised to

195, Léopold Senghor, “Le Français, Langue de Culture,” *Esprit*, No. 311 (November 1962): 837-844, and “Léopold Sédar Senghor, President of the Republic of Senegal,” in Katema Yifru, J. Rudolph Grimes, Ibrahim Abboud, et al., “Africa Speaks to the United Nations: A Symposium of Aspirations and Concerns Voiced by Representative Leaders at the UN,” *International Organization*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1962): 303-330.

⁴³¹ Ibid, 323, and Léopold Senghor, “Some Thoughts on Africa: A Continent in Development,” 189-90, 192-3.

⁴³² Léopold Sédar Senghor, “Éléments constructifs d’une civilisation d’inspiration négro-africaine,” in *Présence Africaine Nouvelle Série*, No. 24/25 (fév.-mai 1959): 249-279, and “Avant-Propos,” in Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Nation et Voie Africaine du Socialisme*, 8-9.

⁴³³ Ibid; Léopold Senghor, “Some Thoughts on Africa: A Continent in Development,” 189.

bring a genuine contribution to the project of the Civilisation of the Universal. The most influential contribution of the negro-African/Berber civilisation to the project was its peaceful socialising nature and influence on other states; thus, the spirit of imperialism and destructive tensions, as he witnessed it grow on the continent itself and through the Cold War rivalry, could be stymied.⁴³⁴ Senegal's pursuit of this project, he argued, was also sure to attract other African states to the project because it was not an ideology, but an ideal to follow which was compatible with a state's drive to socialism and a non-aligned policy. Given the African nature of the project, Senghor argued that it would be beneficial to bring North and Sub-Saharan Africa closer together once again.⁴³⁵ Senghor's concept of the 'Civilisation of the Universal', while sounding like a hefty philosophical concept, was never really covered in great depth because it was never really designed to. Instead, its function was merely to justify the good reasons behind fusing of European with African values, or even more specifically, Senghor's goal of continuing the relationship between France and Africa.

Chapter V: The Formation of the Casablanca Group in the Context of Moroccan-Mauritanian Conflict

During the hectic period in inter-African affairs of 1960-1, many issues caused the division of the African states. One particularly important cause, the Moroccan challenge to Mauritania's independence, is absent in the literature. Perhaps owing to Mauritania's size, the lack of academic studies on Mauritanian contemporary history, or being overshadowed by the ongoing issue of Morocco's claim on Western Sahara, the Mauritanian Crisis of 1960-3 has simply escaped scholarly attention.⁴³⁶ The lack of scholarly attention to the issue – and its role in dividing Africa until May 1963 – is surprising because archives in Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Ghana, and France hold a surprising amount of documents relating to it. Whilst they shared similar means of trying to gain foreign territories and tried to justify them with the combination

⁴³⁴ Léopold Senghor, "Léopold Sédar Senghor, President of the Republic of Senegal," 323, and Léopold Senghor, "Éléments constructifs d'une civilisation d'inspiration négro-africaine," 189-190.

⁴³⁵ Ibid, 191-2.

⁴³⁶ The only attention paid to this issue (and examined its effects on Maghrebi relations) was conducted by the Tunisian historian Abdeljelil Temimi who used Moroccan and Tunisian archives. See, Abdeljelil Temimi, "Bourguiba face à l'indépendance de la Mauritanie et relations tuniso-marocaines à la lumière des correspondances diplomatiques, 1957-1960," in Abdeljelil Temimi, *Habib Bourguiba: Père Fondateur de la Tunisie moderne et la fin d'un mythe* (Tunis: Publications de la Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 2012).

of a historical narrative and claims of illegitimacy of colonial-era borders, Morocco's challenge to Mauritanian independence was different than Nkrumah's challenge on Togo or Ivory Coast. Unlike the Ghanaian case, the Moroccan regime had a different relationship to its claim as it was used it as a crutch to rally the population around the regime. By making the Mauritanian issue part of the new national narrative, the Moroccan Kings made it impossible to abandon the issue because they would leave themselves open to crippling criticism at home and appear weak. From the point of view of the Mauritanian regime, Morocco's claims on its right to sovereignty was naturally tied to its immediate security and legitimacy. With many political rivals located in the border regions of Mauritania, the regime of Mokhtar Ould Daddah had to contend with a receptive audience to Moroccan claims inside its own state.

Morocco's determination to grab Mauritania for itself, like most developments of relations between North and Sub-Saharan Africa during this period, had considerable effects for inter-African relations as a whole. The most important effect was that it helped drive groups of African states further apart. As the issue lay unresolved from 1958 to 1963, both the Mauritanian and Moroccan regime tried to corral support from other African states, making it a wider African issue. States like Tunisia, Senegal, and Nigeria were appalled that Morocco, an African state, could have the gall to undermine the legitimacy of another African government and infringe on its sovereignty. Others, notably Ghana, Egypt, and Mali, sided with Morocco because they believed the narrative that France had unjustly cut off Morocco's southern province in its colonial quest to divide and rule. The Mauritanian Question, therefore, precipitated the creation of the Casablanca Group of states as Mauritania's new allies and supporters founded their rival groups in Brazzaville and Monrovia.

Morocco and its claim on Mauritania

The claims on Mauritania were levelled first by the popular Istiqlal Party in 1957 and picked up by the Moroccan royalty and government would prove to be the cornerstone of its African policy as its continued and present, albeit more limited, claims on Western Sahara testify. The origins of this stand on the territories south of its borders lay in the combination of two factors. The first factor was that in 1956-7 Morocco was a new state and embarked on an important process of state formation and began to tailor an identity, particularly around the idea of the historic rights of the Alawite throne which retraced its roots to the 16th Century. This

belief led many political leaders in Morocco to think that Morocco had been unjustly truncated during the colonial period to a mere fragment of what was once the large Cherifian Empire which spanned across parts of North and West Africa. This led the most important political party, the Istiqlal, to put pressure the regime to claim the entirety of its ancestral lands by popularising the idea domestically.⁴³⁷ The second factor which complicated the issue was the existence of a discrepancy in the debated understanding in this period of the limits of Morocco's southern borders between Morocco, Spain, France, and later Mauritania and Algeria. The French and Spanish governments believed the borders in Western Sahara and the north of what would become Mauritania and Algeria to be fixed firmly through existing treaties dating back a few decades, but Morocco disagreed citing different older treaties, and the vagueness of the colonial powers' supposed spheres of effective authority. Both this discrepancy in the understanding of Morocco's southern borders and the historical past served the regime as justifications to its land claims.⁴³⁸ In support to its claims, maps were drawn of 'Greater Morocco' – first by the Istiqlal in 1957 then the Moroccan state in 1959 – and distributed both through the press and at state-level summits. In those two years the precision of the map increased as the Moroccan state made its own version. In 1957 the Istiqlal's map of Greater Morocco was rather vague and shown to encompass Mauritania, parts of Senegal, French Soudan, and Spanish Sahara.⁴³⁹ The Moroccan Government built on this map, refined it, and made a large copy show at the Arab League meeting in Casablanca in September 1959. At this meeting the Moroccan delegation presented the Arab delegates a map of 1,5 m by 1,0 m clearly showing the limits of Greater Morocco to encompass all of Mauritania, sizeable parts of Algeria (both the region of Colomb-Béchar and some territory adjacent to it), the Spanish enclave of Ifni, and the Rio de Oro.⁴⁴⁰

The King took to the idea of claiming the lands to his south in a bid to galvanise a nation behind one narrative, the throne, and the Moroccan Government. Thus, his claims to Mauritania

⁴³⁷ Alicia Campos-Serrano and Jose Antonio Rodriguez-Esteban, "Imagined Territories and Histories in Conflict during the Struggles for Western Sahara, 1956-1979," *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol. 55 (2017): 45-6.

⁴³⁸ "Notes de la Direction Générale des Affaires marocaines et tunisiennes. I. Frontières du Maroc. Paris, 24 avril 1958," 509-14, and "Note de la Direction d'Afrique-Levant. La question mauritanienne et l'avenir africain français. Paris, 21 avril 1958. N. n 15/AL," in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français: 1958, Tome I* (1er janvier – 30 juin) (Paris : Imprimerie Nationale, 1993), 497-9.

⁴³⁹ Alicia Campos-Serrano and Jose Antonio Rodriguez-Esteban, "Imagined Territories and Histories in Conflict during the Struggles for Western Sahara, 1956-1979," 45-6.

⁴⁴⁰ "Maroc: Carte du Grand Maroc." Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963), Folder 113. I was not able to obtain a copy of the map, but this Senegalese intelligence report described it well.

fulfilled the purpose of crafting the crucial national narrative that Morocco had a long and tragic history which dated back to a large and glorious empire which ended up truncated by foreign powers. The idea of a larger Morocco and the fixing of a historic injustice by the colonial powers was also very popular in the country, and Mohammed V gained popularity, prestige, and legitimacy from the issue because it helped reinforce his image of an anti-colonial ruler. The idea of calling for a return of Mauritania to Morocco was not simply an ideological measure meant to reinforce the idea of the nation, as it had an instrumental purpose as a leverage tactic. Since its independence in 1956, the King repeatedly asked the French to evacuate their troops from Moroccan soil and see their sovereignty respected, and the French either refused or gave vague promises.⁴⁴¹ Levelling a very large claim on external territory at the same time as demanding the permanent withdrawal of French troops from Morocco could very well cause the French to appease them and give up the smaller and much more immediate goal of French evacuation from its bases in Morocco.

Another reason motivating an interest in Mauritania was the incredible potential of the iron ore deposits at the mine near Fort Gouraud. The mining project was very extensive and ambitious (it included building a railway and a port), and it promised to be very lucrative for its investors. The mine held iron ore of excellent quality and enough to supply a growing world market for sixteen years, and the majority of the mine's shares were held by France (55%) while the rest split between Great Britain, Germany, and Italy.⁴⁴² The shareholders of the development company (MIFERMA) petitioned their case to the IBRD for a loan to exploit the mine and successfully obtained the loan. This infuriated the Moroccan government because it had opposed MIFERMA's bid because they claimed that since the mine was in Mauritania, and Mauritania was in Morocco, it was therefore theirs to exploit.⁴⁴³ While his claims to Mauritania had an ideological and instrumental purpose, Mohammed V really believed in it. Throughout his reign he fought hard on the diplomatic front in the attempt to gain Mauritania until his death in

⁴⁴¹ For a good example, see "Note de la Direction Générale des Affaires marocaines et tunisiennes. *Au sujet de l'accord du 1^{er} septembre 1960 relatif à l'évacuation des bases françaises du Maroc*. Paris, le 14 septembre. N. Secret," reprinted in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français : 1960, Tome II (1^{er} juillet – 31 décembre)* (Paris : Imprimerie Nationale, 1995), 326-330.

⁴⁴² Report No. T.O. 225a. Appraisal of the MIFERMA Iron Ore Mining Project (Islamic Republic of Mauritania), February 12, 1960. Department of Technical Operations, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Accessed on 5 February 2018. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/194751468056367503/pdf/multi0page.pdf>

⁴⁴³ "Note de la Direction d'Afrique-Levant. La question mauritanienne et l'avenir africain français. Paris, 21 avril 1958. N. n 15/AL," in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français: 1958, Tome I*, 497.

February 1961, and often at the expense of his attention to domestic matters.⁴⁴⁴ By then the idea had taken such a powerful hold over the Moroccan public and politicians that his successor, Hassan II, whom counselled his father to abandon the claim, was forced to take it up and thus it remained the bedrock of Moroccan foreign policy until the early 1970s.⁴⁴⁵

The King found conditions to be ripe to claim the French-held territory of Mauritania as the French-held territory seemed wracked with internal divisions. Mauritania's society in the 1950s was not extremely cohesive and was split between three prominent groups – the Moorish population of the North, the Black Africans of the South, and a very influential religious class, the Marabouts (called *zuwaya*).⁴⁴⁶ Tensions existed between them, and important myths were rooted inside their societies. The Moorish people tended to see themselves as the most important because of their perceived historical role as the warriors and true leaders who protected the Marabouts. The Marabouts saw themselves as the proper guides for Mauritania's future because the Moors were rapacious and likely to cause chaos in the country after the French left. The Marabouts also tended to favour French rule because of the freedom of religion in the colony and their protection from the Moors. The Black Africans of the south resented both the Moors and Marabouts because they perceived them as a historical class of slaves and unfit to rule a country. The southerners of Mauritania believed they were equals to the others, and that the land was theirs first.⁴⁴⁷ Lastly, there was a further division, on the East-West axis. The peoples living in Western Mauritania held themselves to be more intellectually cultivated than the Easterners, due to their earlier interaction with the French, and therefore more fit to rule over the rest of Mauritania. The Easterners resented this and resisted the Westerners' attempts to dominate them.⁴⁴⁸

This growing resentment eventually led to efforts by some prominent eastern leaders to identify more with French Soudan, and after independence, to clamour for the East's inclusion into a very willing Mali.⁴⁴⁹ Its fledgling national movement, led by Mokhtar Ould Daddah, had

⁴⁴⁴ Doudou Thiam, *The Foreign Policy of African States*, xi-xii.

⁴⁴⁵ Mokhtar Ould Daddah, *La Mauritanie contre vents et marées* (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2003), chapters 7 – 9.

⁴⁴⁶ There were other historic distinctions in Mauritanian society outside of a racial aspect, notably the *hassan*, a dominant, Arabic-speaking 'warrior' class), the *znaga* (dependent/servant) and the *haratin* (formerly slave/servile).

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid, 218.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid, 219.

⁴⁴⁹ "Mémorandum soumis à l'appréciation des Dirigeants du Mali par le Bureau de l'Union Nationale Mauritanienne – PFA." Folder 172. Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963), National Archives of Senegal.

its hands full given its ambitious goal of breaking down these divisions and uniting all into one nation, behind one party.⁴⁵⁰ It is also difficult to imagine how the Moroccan government could have ruled Mauritania and integrated it into Morocco. Moroccan calls for a return of Mauritania never went beyond moral and religious justifications as no plan was ever put forward on how Morocco was going to merge the territory into its existing Kingdom. French officials at the time doubted that Morocco wanted to incorporate the Black Mauritanian population into the Kingdom, and it later transpired in conversations between Daddah and Hassan II that they were right. The King's intentions, despite saying that he wanted to incorporate a Mauritania stretching to parts of modern-day Senegal and Mali, actually never intended to get control of all of it.⁴⁵¹ Although there is little evidence stating why, one likely explanation is that the Moorish politicians in favour of their incorporation into Morocco were doing so only to prevent the formation of a Mauritania where sharing power with a Black population was envisaged. Another would be that the Moroccan monarch and Government simply did not want to include a large black population in the state. Some prominent Moorish leaders in the North did have significant backing against such a measure and instead favoured to unify with Morocco, giving Morocco's claims some legitimacy.⁴⁵² Mauritania's viability as a future state seemed unlikely, as it was a state with little population, a large historical social and ethnic divide between the Moors of the North and the Black Africans of the South, with the latter seen as the slaves to the former. As was often repeated by the Moroccans at the time, the national movement in Mauritania couldn't have much of a grasp or even a chance to build a country out of the territory as it had no capital to speak of fit for a state. Nouakchott was built from scratch in March 1958 for this purpose.⁴⁵³

During the first years of its claims on Mauritania, the Moroccans were relentless. Imitating a tactic from the Egyptians, Rabat built its own radio network and tried to delegitimise

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid, 218-9.

⁴⁵¹ King Hassan II revealed this to the Senegalese during a conversation. See, "N. 152/AM/S. L'ambassadeur de la République du Sénégal à Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères du Gouvernement de la République du Sénégal, Dakar. Rabat, le 12 mars 1961." VP 145, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁴⁵² "Note de la Sous-Direction du Maroc. Au sujet des revendications territoriales marocaines. Paris, 27 juin 1960. N. n 892," in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères *Documents Diplomatiques Français: 1960, Tome I (1er janvier – 30 juin)* (Paris : Imprimerie Nationale, 1995), 906-9, and Mokhtar Ould Daddah, *La Mauritanie contre vents et marées*, 212.

⁴⁵³ For a good example of the Moroccan Government trying to dispel Mauritania's claim as a state, see "United Nations General Assembly, *Fifteenth Session Official Records*. 947th Plenary Meeting, Wednesday, 14 December 1960, at 3 p.m., New York," page 1284, United Nations, accessed 24 November 2017, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/747044>.

the Mauritanian regime of Ould Daddah by broadcasting the ‘facts’ of the Mauritanian Question and daily labelled the Mauritanian leader a puppet of the French.⁴⁵⁴ The Moroccan Government also published and spread publications, serials, and studies attempting to legitimise their claims on their lost southern province. One study, titled ‘*The Kingdom of Morocco and its natural boundaries*’, came complete with a map of ‘Greater Morocco’ and was designed to convince foreign governments of their attempts to bring Mauritania into the Moroccan state.⁴⁵⁵ Before Mauritania’s independence in the fall of 1960, Moroccan diplomats travelled to European countries to convince their governments of the legitimacy of their King’s claim on their southern province.⁴⁵⁶ There is also evidence that Mohammed V also profited from help from Nasser. Some important political figures from the North of Mauritania, having to leave the country for their pro-Morocco sympathies, fled to Cairo. From there they received help to travel to Rabat where the King welcomed them with open arms because they could extend and legitimise his claim on Mauritania. These included the former ministers of commerce, education, the emir of Trarza, the director of the compensation bank of Mauritania, and the president of the Mauritanian youth organisation. Some remained in Cairo, joined the other African movements of national liberation and formed their own, the National Liberation Movement of Mauritania, and placed Prince Cissé Zackaria Ibn Kainou as its Secretary General.⁴⁵⁷ The King also met other figures who fled directly to Morocco to seek protection and patronage; one such figure, Mohammed Ould Oumeir, was given the title ‘Emir of the Sahara’ by Mohammed V, who also naturally backed the former’s claim that his Emirate stretched as far south as Senegal.⁴⁵⁸ Another favored tactic of the Moroccan King was to place exiled Mauritanian politicians into Moroccan government positions to further concretise the claim that Mauritania was part of his Kingdom.

⁴⁵⁴ Mokhtar Ould Daddah, *La Mauritanie contre vents et marées*, 190.

⁴⁵⁵ “Note de la Sous-Direction du Maroc. Au sujet des revendications territoriales marocaines. Paris, 27 juin 1960. N. n 892,” in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères *Documents Diplomatiques Français: 1960, Tome I*, 907, 907n.

⁴⁵⁶ “M. Roger Seydoux, Ambassadeur de France à Rabat, à M. Couve de Murville, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Rabat, 10 novembre 1960. T. nos 5651 à 5656,” in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères *Documents Diplomatiques Français: 1960, Tome II*, 586.

⁴⁵⁷ “Le Caire, 1er juin 1958. Le Prince Cissé Zacakaria Ibn Kainou de Guidimakha – Secrétaire Général du Mouvement National de Libération Mauritanienne. 5, Rue Kacem Amin, Koubeh Garden, Le Caire.” VP 176, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁴⁵⁸ “M. Pineau, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à M. Parodi, Ambassadeur de France à Rabat. Paris, 1er avril 1958, 13h. T. nos 1878 à 1882,” in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français: 1958, Tome I*, 411, 411n.

Horma Ould Babana was given the post of Morocco's Ambassador to Libya, and Mokhtar Ould Bah was nominated director of Moroccan radio.⁴⁵⁹

Mauritania's Defence against the Moroccan Claims

In the years before independence, the Mauritanian national movement was forced by the Moroccan claims to its territory to define its foreign policy outlook for the future. Mokhtar Ould Daddah, the leader of the Mauritanian movement (first at head of the Mauritanian Progressive Union and then the Mauritanian Regroupement Party), laid down the basis for Mauritanian foreign policy for the next two decades – Mauritania would serve as a bridge between 'White Africa' and 'Black Africa'.⁴⁶⁰ The new state of Mauritania would be a true reflection of its population as it would be inclusionary to both Moors of the North, Black Africans in the south, and while it would identify itself deeply with Islam, never would it pretend to be an Arab state.⁴⁶¹ Thus, Mauritania would play a role on the continent both north and south of the Sahara. Morocco's claim on its territory in violation of its sovereignty, however, cut down the number of foreign policy options for Mokhtar Ould Daddah because it was a critical security issue. From 1958 to 1963, Daddah's foreign policy objectives understandably consisted of defensive measures. Daddah was forced to gather support for its claim to independence and the sanctity of its sovereignty, to find the support required for Mauritania's accession to the UN, as well as establishing a counter-propaganda radio campaign against Morocco and clamping down on pro-Moroccan sentiment in the country's north.⁴⁶²

The Mauritanian Question and Subsequent Deterioration of Tunisian-Moroccan Relations

From 1956-9, Tunisian-Moroccan relations did not get off to a great start but remained cordial despite some suspicion and resentment on both sides. From the end of 1960 onwards, they would become acrimonious and each Maghrebi state found itself in two different competing African groupings. The turning point in Tunisian-Moroccan relations came as a result of standing

⁴⁵⁹ "Note de la Sous-Direction du Maroc. Au sujet des revendications territoriales marocaines. Paris, 27 juin 1960. N. n 892," in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères *Documents Diplomatiques Français: 1960, Tome I*, 906-7.

⁴⁶⁰ According to a circulated document throughout the *Communauté*, Daddah was reported to be advocating this policy to the Arab states, and his memoirs mention this fact often. "Communauté. 24 JUL. 1960. Mauritanie. UP 19." VP 141, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Archives Nationales du Sénégal. Mokhtar Ould Daddah, *La Mauritanie contre vents et marées*, 193, 439.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid. The claim to not be an Arab state was particularly important for Mauritania's foreign affairs because the Arab League overwhelmingly sided for Morocco in August 1960 during its summit in Lebanon.

⁴⁶² Ibid, 190-1, and chapter 8.

up to differing principles – Mohammed V arguing that adding Mauritania to the Kingdom would right a historic wrong induced by colonialism, and Bourguiba standing up for the principle of state sovereignty over their own borders and the necessity for postcolonial states to refrain from certain policies that would turn them into the imperialist states they so despised.

In October 1960, the President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania showed his intentions to declare Mauritania an independent state in the following weeks. This was hardly surprising at the time, but it did set off a race between Daddah and Mohammed V to find allies over the issue of its recognition. Daddah visited and met with leaders from the Arab World but found them unflinchingly on Morocco's side. West African leaders, however, were much more amenable to recognise Mauritania's independence. In October 1960, Daddah travelled to Nigeria and met its Prime Minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, who sensed the dangerous precedent Moroccan claims would bring to African politics. Balewa told Daddah he had turned down the Moroccan delegation's request, and he advised them to stop these claims for fear that it could incite others to claim lands close to their arbitrarily created borders and thus poison inter-African politics. Besides, Morocco was not coming out of these claims looking clean: "By claiming not only the totality of Mauritania, but also of a portion of Mali and even a part of Senegal, *Morocco is behaving as an expansionist state*. This is quite grave for an independent Africa." Nigeria then became the second African state after Liberia to recognise Mauritania's independence.⁴⁶³ In late October Daddah met the leaders of the Francophone African states at the conference in Abidjan; they too declared their support for Mauritania's independence, and Daddah later remarked that their ensuing active support was crucial in defeating Morocco's claims.⁴⁶⁴

In October 1960 Daddah also held talks with Saddok Mokaddem, the Foreign Minister of Tunisia. Daddah was hopeful the Tunisians would be sympathetic to the justice underpinning Mauritania's cause despite their relationship with a fellow Maghrebi state. Mokaddem told him Mauritania could count on Tunisia for its unconditional and active support despite risking a rupture of diplomatic relations with Morocco. "*Tant pis*," said Mokaddem, "your cause seems just, the reason for which we will recognise your independence. [Bourguiba] does not mess around when it comes to principles."⁴⁶⁵ Nearly a month later on 23 November Mokaddem called

⁴⁶³ Mokhtar Ould Daddah, *La Mauritanie contre vents et marées*, 215-6. Italics mine.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid, 216-7.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid, 216.

a press conference and gave an official statement that Tunisia was recognising Mauritania's independence. Tunisia was recognising its independence, Mokaddem explained, because of his country's attachment to the principle of self-determination of peoples, and besides, Tunisia could not go against fifteen other African states who had done the same because Tunisia had sponsored their accession to the United Nations which recognised those principles. In a propaganda blow to Morocco, Mokaddem finished with a thinly veiled insult – he stated that Tunisia would not side with Morocco and against independence because it meant prolonging colonialism.⁴⁶⁶

Mokaddem was merely delivering Bourguiba's verdict on the issue, which he had reflected on since at least early 1959. According to documents in the Tunisian archives, Tunisia's ambassador in Paris, Habib Bourguiba jr., met in early January with Mokhtar Ould Daddah, and it was the first time a Tunisian official was given the other view of the Mauritanian question. Daddah indicated that Mauritania had no wishes at all to become a part of Morocco which was only interested in Mauritania's riches. Daddah disclosed that it was possible for his country to reach autonomy in the coming years, that he saw Tunisia as a good example to follow and thus would be honoured if he were invited for an official visit. Bourguiba jr. reported that Daddah made a good impression on him and recommended his father not reject the Mauritanian view *a priori*.⁴⁶⁷ Throughout 1959 and 1960, Bourguiba had plenty of time to consider his future position on the Mauritanian question.

Mohammed V was taken by surprise with Mokaddem's statement and quickly tried to convince Bourguiba to backtrack. In the second week of November, Mohammed V sent his son, the Crown Prince Hassan, to Tunis to deliver a note to Bourguiba and attempt to change the Tunisian leader's mind. Mohammed V conveyed his disappointment because Bourguiba's decision threatened to derail their relations. It was therefore up to him to side with Morocco to ensure it would not happen. The note expresses the amazement that given Tunisia's shared colonial experience they could not understand why Bourguiba did not recognise the obvious justification for Morocco's calls for the return of one of its territories which was violently torn away by colonialism. The Mauritanian question was an important issue for national unity,

⁴⁶⁶ "M. Raoul-Duval, Chargé d'Affaires de France à Tunis, à M. Couve de Murville, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Tunis, 24 novembre 1960. T. nos 5067 à 5073." Reprinted in DDF 1960, Tome II, 624.

⁴⁶⁷ Abdeljelil Temimi, "Bourguiba face à l'indépendance de la Mauritanie et relations tuniso-marocaines à la lumière des correspondances diplomatiques, 1957-1960," 78.

Mohammed V wrote, and it was his duty to handle it; he also stated that he harboured no feelings of oppression, only feelings of fighting for a just cause.⁴⁶⁸ Mohammed V then warned that Tunisia should reconsider and side with Morocco, a brotherly Maghrebi nation, or else risk not only the stability and future of their relations, but also the project of Maghrebi unity.⁴⁶⁹

Bourguiba's answer to Mohammed V came rapidly, and it is evident in his note that he was incredibly upset. Bourguiba was not only hurt that the Moroccans started a radio propaganda campaign against his country, but he also claimed that it was in no way Tunisia's fault for this situation. Mohammed V had never been clear on his claims to Mauritania and failed to provide enough detail or enough time for foreign states, especially Tunisia, to make up their mind.⁴⁷⁰ Yet this was nearly beside the point because the disappointed Bourguiba could not understand why Mohammed V did not see he was committing a serious wrong by claiming Mauritania for his state. This was most injurious to the Tunisian leader, and he dedicated the rest of his note to lecture the Moroccan monarch on how to properly act in international affairs, as well as the duty and obligations incumbent upon postcolonial states. In order for postcolonial states to add their weight to the world stage and properly integrate in international relations, he argued, they had to abide by strict fundamental principles. The most important of these principles was to help liquidate colonialism and foreign domination "whatever the nationality of the colonizer or the geographical situation of the colonised people." This meant refraining from any action which would help foreign domination, "and better yet, it is our obligation to support the independence of peoples, without any reservations."⁴⁷¹ Bourguiba reminded Mohammed V of recent political developments in French parts of Africa. According to Bourguiba France had divvied up its African holdings into distinct territories which went through of period of administrative change and like the general evolution of the world, acquired a political awareness which caused them to create little autonomous states. These states then abandoned the idea of autonomy and came together in *la Communauté* before finally becoming independent. Bourguiba reminded

⁴⁶⁸ "Lettre de Sa Majesté le Roi du Maroc à Son Excellence le Président de la République Tunisienne au sujet de la Mauritanie." Reprinted in, *Livre Blanc sur le différend entre le gouvernement de la république tunisienne et le gouvernement cherifien du Maroc*. 22. This diplomatic note was dated 7 November 1960.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid, 23.

⁴⁷⁰ "Réponse de Son Excellence le Président de la République Tunisienne à la lettre de Sa Majesté le Roi du Maroc. 14 Novembre 1960." Reprinted in, *Livre Blanc sur le différend entre le gouvernement de la république tunisienne et le gouvernement cherifien du Maroc*. 28-9.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid, 30.

Mohammed V that the independence of these states was never contested by either Tunisia or Morocco under the pretexts now used by Morocco that the borders were created arbitrarily or artificially, that the character of their independence was incomplete, or that the leaders of these states would become the puppets of colonial powers.⁴⁷² Tunisia could not oppose Mauritania's independence because it meant transgressing this principle which it necessarily had to apply universally to every case.⁴⁷³

Bourguiba's response to Mohammed V was incredibly curt and to the point. Morocco was not only in the wrong when it came to its claims, but its behaviour was detrimental to the efforts of movements seeking independence and made it more difficult to integrate in the concert of nations. The national movement in Mauritania was legitimate and no different than the others which sprouted up in other parts of French-held African territories. It not only had to be helped as much as possible, but its goals and borders also had to be respected. Most scathing in his response was the ultimate reprimand possible from one postcolonial leader to give to another. Bourguiba skirted a very fine line and without saying the words, allowed the Moroccan monarch to fill in the blanks. Bourguiba blamed Morocco for partaking in a familiar imperialist venture, the attempted foreign domination of another people vying to be free. This was no small charge, and with it came the implicit warning that Morocco was on the edge of becoming what former colonial states dreaded most – an imperial power. Bourguiba's reply to Mohammed V was more than a mere message, it was the Tunisian leader taking his stand in African politics. This note is very important because it sketches the outline of his position in Africa affairs for the next three years: Tunisia would help and assist any state-in-becoming with what it could and seek out allies. Bourguiba took this stand, even at the cost of ruining his relations with a fellow Maghrebi state. It is clear that he believed that allowing and supporting Morocco's claims on Mauritania could set a very nasty precedent for African political integration. The transgression of established borders – whether set by colonial powers or not – was not acceptable since it could jeopardise the harmony needed in African politics and increase suspicion and tensions. Any African state could then challenge the legitimacy of any border and make claims on foreign territory for whatever reason. Furthermore, Tunisia was also taking a stand on the issue because much like Mauritania, it had a history of suffering from foreign interference in its own affairs with Egypt

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Ibid, 30-1.

supporting Bourguiba's opposition.⁴⁷⁴ Furthermore, coming to Mauritania's defence against another African state's disrespect of sovereignty was Bourguiba's recognition that the continent had given him a new opportunity to play an important role and help shape the future of decolonisation.

Mauritania's Steps to Independence

On 24 August 1960, Daddah sent a message to the Arab leaders attending the Arab League the following week in Lebanon because he'd heard that Morocco had put the Mauritanian issue on the agenda in its quest for support. Daddah implored them not to support Moroccan claims because they contradicted the principle of the self-determination of peoples enshrined in the UN Charter, and because they also transgressed the "imperatives of the Afro-Asian peoples." Daddah expressed his confidence that the Arab states would "refuse to accept the imperialist ambitions of the Moroccan Government and to recognise the Islamic Republic of Mauritania at the accession of its independence."⁴⁷⁵ On 11 September 1960, the Mauritanian Government formally dissolved Nahda, a powerful opposition party with strong ties to Morocco, on the grounds that it was behind violent incidents in the country's north on the leadup to independence. When Daddah was questioned by reporters about the arguments circulating for fusing Mauritania to Morocco, he responded that only some lost souls were trying to convince others and the message really didn't have an audience.⁴⁷⁶

On 18 September 1960, a few weeks after the Arab League meeting in Lebanon, Daddah called a press conference. He announced that he would fly to New York right after his country's independence celebrations in November for Mauritania's accession to the UN and fight off any Moroccan attempts to convince the body to side with Morocco. In order to gain inclusion to the UN, Daddah said he needed the help of both France and Tunisia just as they had helped the other West African states.⁴⁷⁷ The Moroccan Government replied soon after by sending Ahmed Ould

⁴⁷⁴ Michael Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb*, 38-9, and Fathi al-Dib, *Nasser et la Révolution égyptienne*, 65-7.

⁴⁷⁵ "Communauté. 24 JUL. 1960. UP 19." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 141. This document's date is mis-stamped by a month given it was a UP news report from 24 August 1960.

⁴⁷⁶ "Le Gouvernement mauritanien dissout le parti d'opposition "Nahda". 11 sept. 1960." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 141.

⁴⁷⁷ "Une conférence de presse de M. Ould Daddah. Paris, 10/9-(AFP)-18 SEP. 1960." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 141.

Abdallah, a former Mauritanian official living in Rabat after being fired from the Mauritanian Government, to New York. Abdallah's role was to contest Mauritania's independence and possible membership at the UN, as well as support Morocco with its claim.⁴⁷⁸ In the first week of October Daddah sent invitations for the upcoming independence celebrations on 28 November to various African heads of states. On 6 October, a large group of heads of states from Africa agreed to come to Nouakchott for the event, many coming from the ex-AOF. None of the states who would form the Casablanca Group sent delegations to Mauritania's independence celebrations.⁴⁷⁹ In the week of Mauritania's declaration of independence, the Mauritanian Government countered Moroccan claims by publishing a 'Green Book' which gave its side of the story. The book included a history of the country, and it claimed that Mauritania became completely distinct from Morocco during its colonial administration from Senegal. Since then it grew into a sovereign nation with a foreign policy aimed to make Mauritania the bridge between North Africa and Black Africa. The book made it clear that the Mauritanian Government expected to be respected as sovereign state and that its independence was to be made concrete by Mauritania's accession to the United Nations.⁴⁸⁰

Moroccan Desperation and the Creation of the Casablanca Conference

With Mauritania being debated at the United Nations and staunchly defended by a bloc led by Senegal and Tunisia, Morocco scrambled to find allies to help their cause. In December 1960 Mohammed V found a solution – he would create a bloc of his own.⁴⁸¹ In order for his idea to work and draw enough interest, the King had to bring like-minded states to a summit on other issues facing African politics. In other words, not many other African states were as invested in the Mauritanian question, so he had to make the summit more appealing to others by opening the floor to their own pressing issues. Yet the King had an ace up his sleeve. Invitations were sent that month, but since the fault lines in African politics were already drawn, specifically because

⁴⁷⁸ "AFP87. Mauritanie – Oct 1960." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 141.

⁴⁷⁹ "Les Chefs d'État du Conseil de l'Entente Assisteront aux Fêtes d'Indépendance de la Mauritanie. 6 octobre 1960." Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 141.

⁴⁸⁰ "Nouakchott. 22/11 (AFP)." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 141.

⁴⁸¹ King Hassan later admitted that the Casablanca Conference had been his father's brainchild. "N. 152/AM/S. L'Ambassadeur de la République du Sénégal [à] Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères du Gouvernement de la République du Sénégal, Dakar. Rabat, le 12 mars 1961." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 145.

of the two different positions on France's continued role in Africa, only a select few leaders got invitations.⁴⁸² This was an indicator, and later confirmed with the resolutions adopted, that to corral a group together the Moroccan King appealed to a broad anti-French sentiment as a common denominator. His appeal hit the mark: despite not converging together for the purpose of discussing the Mauritanian question, Morocco, Ghana, Egypt, Mali, Guinea, the GPRA, and Libya signed some resolutions hostile to France. These included Mohammed V's goal, the resolution in support of Morocco's claim to Mauritania, as well as the resolution against French nuclear testing on African soil, and the resolution appealing for France to end the war in Algeria.⁴⁸³ Looking at the resolutions, it is apparent that the states involved all had a bone to pick with de Gaulle. Ghana had severe reservations for French intentions on the continent since the formation of the Community in 1958 and was the most vocal African opponent to France's nuclear testing in Algeria because the fallout reached the country's northern regions. Egypt's support of the Algerian war effort against France since 1954 and the harbouring of its provisional government showed its inclination against the French. Mali had recently split from Senegal and blamed the French for the failure of the Mali Federation. Guinea was still resentful over the way France ended its relationship after the country decided not to join *la Communauté*.

Anti-French sentiment was a facilitating factor tempting states to attend the Casablanca Conference, but not the only one. Since Mohammed V opened the floor to others' pressing issues to lure the invitees to come to Casablanca, other resolutions were signed, notably on the Congo Crisis, the status of Ruanda-Burundi, the Palestine Question (of special importance to Egypt), Apartheid and racial discrimination in Africa. Of great consequence to Africa's politics for the next two years was the resolution which founded the Casablanca bloc – the foundation of the 'African Charter of Casablanca'. Despite not being very interested in this conference at the start, the Ghanaian leader, Kwame Nkrumah, quickly became the most energetic state supporter of this charter until the end of its political relevance in 1963. Coming originally to use the conference as a platform for discussion and statements on the Congo Crisis, he recognised enough common ground between the state leaders during the talks as his opportunity to put his plans of African

⁴⁸² King Hassan told the Senegalese ambassador two months after the conference that due to the conflicting stance on France, many states were obviously not invited to partake in the Conference. Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Ceylon also attended the conference, the only non-African state, ostensibly to report its findings to the Afro-Asian group. *La Conférence des Chefs d'État Africains à Casablanca*. Official pamphlet of the resolutions found at *Dar al-Kutub al-Wataniya*, Tunis.

unity into action.⁴⁸⁴ This charter called for the creation of several bodies and invited any independent African state to join them: the African Political Committee, the African Economic Committee, the African Cultural Committee, and a Joint African High Command. These bodies had a simple overriding objective – to help liberate and consolidate an independent Africa. To do so, the charter created permanent committees to be able to coordinate the policies of the signatory states to help “liberate the African territories still under foreign domination [...], to liquidate colonialism and neo-colonialism in all their forms, to discourage the maintenance of foreign troops and the establishment of bases which endanger the liberation of Africa and [...] to rid the African continent of political and economic interventions and pressures,” and to encourage the African states to adopt economic and social policies to benefit their populations and ensure an equitable distribution of resources domestically.⁴⁸⁵ Unlike in some previous instances in African politics, the charter was not paying lip service to unity at all. So keen was Nkrumah that he told the head of his delegation, K.B. Asante, to stay in Casablanca and begin work immediately to create these committees.⁴⁸⁶

Tunisia’s Foray in African Affairs

Tunisia was also in a good position to honour one of its most important principles – the support of a national movement’s efforts to claim independence from the colonial powers – since it was an elected member of the United Nations Security Council in 1959-1960. It thus could do more than recognise Mauritania’s independence from France in November 1960, it could give it a boost and notoriety in international affairs by sponsoring its accession to the United Nations. In 1959 Tunisia was elected to the Security Council and thus became the only Arab and African state to sit with the major powers. In the summer of 1960, many West African countries from the French Community declared their independence, and included states like the Ivory Coast, the Mali Federation (later becoming Senegal and Mali), the Malagasy Republic, Togo, Cameroun, Chad, Gabon, Niger, Upper Volta, Dahomey, the Central African Republic, and the Republic of Congo. This was a perfect opportunity for Tunisia to help and get noticed, and it stepped in to sponsor their accession to the United Nations with France’s help. This was an excellent way to

⁴⁸⁴ Interview with K.B. Asante, Nkrumah’s top diplomat in his delegation at Casablanca, conducted in Accra, 9 March 2017.

⁴⁸⁵ *La Conférence des Chefs d’État Africains à Casablanca*. Official pamphlet of the resolutions found at *Dar al-Kutub al-Wataniya*, Tunis.

⁴⁸⁶ Interview with K.B. Asante.

begin to have good relations with fellow Francophile states, and as French officials correctly remarked at the time, Bourguiba's move was also meant to break Tunisia out of its isolation.⁴⁸⁷ Tunisia's sole position as an African country at the Security Council also gave it the opportunity to act and speak on behalf of its continent to add to its prestige, especially since the breakout of the Congo Crisis. Mongi Slim, the Tunisian Foreign Minister, successfully applied his idea to allow African states to participate in the UN mission in the Congo. In June Bourguiba declared he was sending troops, the first African state to do so (later followed by Ghana and Egypt), and he was thanked publicly by the UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld for his contribution. With the corresponding press offensive in Tunisia reporting the country's role in being in solidarity with fellow Africans and the ramping up of a propaganda campaign against Belgium, it is clear that Tunisia's involvement was devised to bring it more clout and credibility in African affairs, and as French officials evaluated, a clever way to be seen as the "champion of the emancipation of African peoples."⁴⁸⁸ Not only was this necessary to end its isolation and find allies south of the Sahara, but this diplomatic offensive in Africa helped consolidate Bourguiba's domestic legitimacy as a strong Africa anti-colonial leader.

A major fault line was beginning to form in Sub-Saharan Africa just as it did in North Africa. African states began to converge into two camps over the issue of conserving a presence by former colonial powers on the continent. Ex-French colonies might have declared their independence from France in 1960 but they in no way renounced their links to the old metropole. While they did leave the French Community and their multi-lateral agreements, they would negotiate bi-lateral defence, financial, and cultural agreements with France, therefore securing an important presence for the former colonial power in Africa.⁴⁸⁹ This went counter current to some states in Africa which militated for the total liquidation of colonialism on the continent. Countries like Ghana, Egypt, Guinea, and Mali detested the colonial powers and were actively trying to convince the rest of the continent that African states could and needed to proceed together without them.⁴⁹⁰ Since Bourguiba's outlook for Tunisia's future included a close

⁴⁸⁷ "M. de La Chevalerie, Chargé d'Affaires de France à Tunis, à M. Couve de Murville, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Tunis, le 16 juillet 1960. T. nos 2922 à 2928." Reprinted in *Documents Diplomatiques Français 1960, Tome II*, 94-5.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ This material is covered in subsequent chapters.

⁴⁹⁰ Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite* (London: Heinemann, 1963), 177-181.

relationship with France, it gave common ground for an alliance with the francophone African states. Another factor was slowly bringing them together, the threatening behaviour of states like Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, and Mali. By late 1960 these states had all partaken in either claims to territory outside their borders, interfered in the domestic affairs of others, or propaganda campaigns meant to chip away at the legitimacy of foreign rulers - all of which was destabilising to new regimes trying to cement their rule. Egypt tried to delegitimise Bourguiba's rule by hosting Salah Ben Youssef in Cairo and giving him airtime for his anti-Bourguibist message on radio, Kwame Nkrumah made territorial claims on its neighbour Togo, entertained the idea of taking up a small part of the Ivory Coast through an irredentist claim by the Sanwi people, and also tried to delegitimise the leadership of Togo's Sylvanus Olympio, Mohammed V claimed the whole of Mauritania and harboured some Mauritanian politicians in Rabat who engaged in a radio propaganda campaign against Mokhtar Ould Daddah, and Modibo Keita claimed territory in Eastern Mauritania as well as used a political party there to challenge the rule of Daddah and prevent Mauritania from forming a country.⁴⁹¹ The foreign policies of these states was not only deeply invasive to many ex-French colonies, but it also threatened the stability of inter-African relations at a time when every state agreed coming together was needed. The many affected states did worry about the behaviour of others because these policies reminded them of the imperialist tactics they were subjected to in the past.

They did have reason to worry, as a secret imperialist scheme was being hatched in Accra. In February 1961 Prince Hassan was sent to Accra by his father, Mohammed V to discuss African issues.⁴⁹² Nkrumah made an *aide-mémoire* which he then brought to the meeting, and it shows that he devoted a considerable amount of time on the problem of Mauritania before the Prince's arrival. Both considered this issue the most pressing facing the Casablanca states, and Nkrumah came up with a dramatic solution. Nkrumah awaited the Prince with a radical and complicated proposition: Mauritania would be partitioned and go to the Casablanca states. In this scheme, Mali would get swathes of Eastern Mauritania (including the site of the former capital of the Ghanaian Empire Koumbi Saleh), Senegal would get areas north of the Senegal river, and the rest was for Morocco to take as long as it "accept[ed] the principle of a Union with

⁴⁹¹ Mokhtar Ould Daddah, *La Mauritanie contre vents et marées*, 160, 210-1.

⁴⁹² "God be Praised, Mohammed V, King of Morocco, to His Excellency Mr. Kwame Nkrumah, President of the Republic of Ghana." RG 17/1/234, PRAAD.

Mauritania.”⁴⁹³ This partition was contingent on one factor in order to work – the precipitated downfall of Senegal’s Leopold Senghor and his regime. According to Nkrumah, Senegal was an important regional power, and being a close ally to France and Francophile states, it stood as a bulwark to Morocco’s ambitions. Senghor was also steadfast against the Casablanca group and its resolutions, and he waged a propaganda effort against the Casablanca states in which he charged the group of being guided by “Arab Imperialism”, which was nothing more than the main force replacing European imperialism. It was too late to convince Senghor, and he had to go. A change of Senegal’s foreign policy was needed for the plan to work, and this necessitated a change of leadership. Believing that Senghor’s domestic support was weak, Nkrumah suggested to Hassan that a propaganda campaign from the Casablanca powers against Senghor which was enough to knock him off his perch, and then putting Lamine Guèye, a political rival and mayor of Dakar, in power in his stead would bring Senegal under the thumb of fellow Casablanca states. Nkrumah concluded his scheme very succinctly:

“Conclusion: Senghor’s downfall would discourage Houphouet Boigny, upset France’s hand, and sign the death warrant of neo-colonialism in West Africa. It is only then that Mauretania [sic] would be truly united with Morocco, and an era of real independence and African unity supersede colonialism in Africa.”⁴⁹⁴

Nkrumah was very serious about this scheme and he was confident that he could succeed in toppling Senghor, especially since he’d recently established a new radio station he planned to use for propaganda like the Egyptians.

Not only would the Mauritanian question be put to rest and Morocco satisfied, but Ghana would gain enormously from the scheme too. As was said in previous chapters, Nkrumah had militated since 1958 against the French presence through its puppets (what he called a form of ‘neo-colonialism’) in West Africa and relished the chance to at once liquidate French influence there and seal a much larger sphere of influence for the Casablanca powers. Collapsing the state of Mauritania and the leadership of Senegal would also be a crucial step towards his dream of uniting Africa under the terms of the Casablanca states. There was no follow-up evidence

⁴⁹³ “Aide Memoire Relating to the Talks Between Osagyefo and Prince Hassan.” RG 17/1/234, PRAAD. This document was adorned with Nkrumah’s characteristic handwriting in green ink, and “Senghor downfall” visibly written on the top of the first page. It was also not dated, but followed the document cited above in the folder.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

showing the Moroccan response to Nkrumah's proposal, and this plan – if it was ever adopted by both states – came to naught. Yet this *aide-mémoire* is important because it shows the total lack of respect that some African states had for the sovereignty of others and that they harboured some imperialist tendencies themselves.

North and West African Cooperation: The Senegalese-Tunisian Alliance

Bourguiba's sponsorship of newly independent African states to the UN, its defence of Mauritanian independence, and desire to maintain links with France naturally aligned Tunisia with other Francophone states in West Africa. In the week before Mauritania's independence, Tunisia began to focus its diplomatic foray in Africa on the Senegal, then the most important actor in Francophone Africa. Senegal had very recently split from the Mali Federation and was beginning to corral the former members of the French Community into an African bloc aimed at keeping a special relationship with France and forming a united front against radical ideas of African unity. The Mali Federation split was very acrimonious, and it left a very angry Modibo Keita blaming the split on the French and Senegalese. In late September, Mali ruptured its relations with France and called its previous agreements with them void on the account of its meddling in Federation's affairs. The new republic also announced it stood for the unity of Africa and favoured a common African market and currency, therefore effectively declaring its intent to join states with similar goals like Ghana and Guinea.⁴⁹⁵ The rift with Senegal and France also prompted Keita to take a stand on the Mauritanian question. While he did stay mute on the Mauritanian question a few days after the split, Keita moved closer to Morocco in the following weeks in response to Senegal building better relations with Mauritania. Modibo Keita visited Rabat, and rumours soon began circulating in the French press that a plan was afoot to split Mauritania between them.⁴⁹⁶ There was some truth to these as Mali had been dabbling in Mauritania's domestic affairs since February 1960 by supporting politicians in the Eastern regions sympathetic to fusing with Mali.⁴⁹⁷ Mali would then drop its efforts to gain eastern parts

⁴⁹⁵ "Radio Bamako – 23 septembre 1960 – 12 h. 30." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 149.

⁴⁹⁶ "Radio Bamako – 2 septembre 1960 – 12 h. 30." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 149, and Mokhtar Ould Daddah, *La Mauritanie contre vents et marées*, 210-1.

⁴⁹⁷ "Bamako 25 46 17 1535," L'Union Nationale Mauritanienne Section Mauritanienne du Parti de la Fédération Africaine. Aioun-el-itrrouss, le 8 février 1960. Le Trésorier Général de l'Union Nationale Mauritanienne à Messieurs Sall et Yahya Kane respectivement Vice-Président et Secrétaire General de l'U.N.M. en residence, Dakar," and

of Mauritania in late 1962 in favour of choosing to get closer to France and away from the Casablanca states.⁴⁹⁸

The rift between Senegal and Mali caused both to scramble for allies both inside and outside of West Africa, and Senegal soon began to look outside of the states of the ex-AOF and cultivate a very beneficial relationship with another former French colony, Tunisia. At the peak of his isolation from the Arab World and just after he declared his intent to recognise Mauritania's independence, Bourguiba sent his trusted cabinet director to Dakar for talks on the African problems rocking the continent's politics.⁴⁹⁹ Bourguiba reached out to Senghor to sound him out to see his potential to become an ally in African affairs. Although no document was found on the meeting, Senghor sent a personal message to Bourguiba a week later. Senghor expressed how pleased he was at just how much both held the same political objectives. Given their stand on similar issues, Senghor agreed to Bourguiba's opinion of the necessity for both countries to maintain and even grow their ties by increasing the number of contacts between each other.⁵⁰⁰

Over the next month, an alliance grew between the two, and they began to work together to add their leverage against France to change its policy in Africa, particularly in Algeria. Both understood the need to conserve a role for France in Africa's future, and also believed that if they acted in concert, they could strongarm France to alter the political situation on the continent. Tunisia had for years attempted, with little success, to become the mediator between the Algerians and the French to help terminate the war. Both Bourguiba and Senghor believed the war in Algeria was incredibly destabilising for African politics, and that France's total decolonisation of Africa was needed. In January 1961 they began to coordinate their efforts to bring the French and Algerians to negotiate, as Bourguiba had been unsuccessful by himself. Bourguiba urged Senghor to keep pressuring France to negotiate as it would undoubtedly pay off, and supported Senghor's idea of introducing a resolution to the UN as a means of

"DD/JB. Nouakchott, le 19 février 1960. Le Premier Ministre à M. Modibo Keita Secrétaire General P.F.A. – Bamako." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 176.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid, 258-60.

⁴⁹⁹ "Tunis, le 25 novembre 1960. Habib Bourguiba, Président de la République tunisienne, à Son Excellence Léopold Senghor, Président de la République du Sénégal." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 149.

⁵⁰⁰ "N. 476 PR/SP. Dakar, le 2 décembre 1960." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 149.

pressure.⁵⁰¹ Senghor began to help Bourguiba in his attempts to mediate. Senghor sent a letter to de Gaulle asking him to renew negotiations with the Algerians and sit down with Ferhat Abbas.⁵⁰² In February, Mauritania joined Tunisia and Senegal and agreed to introduce a resolution to be backed by twelve African states at the UN to pressure France into negotiations with the Algerians. Bourguiba even went as far as asking Belgium, the United States, and Great Britain to back the resolution given the gravity of the situation. Ultimately, the resolution failed to be adopted, partly because the Algerians themselves resisted accepting it because they would come under fire from allies in the Afro-Asian group. Despite the resolution's failure, Senegal and Tunisia claimed success on their coordinated efforts because the French changed their stance. Just before the General Assembly opened, the Senegalese delegation appealed to the French for talks with the Algerians, and their message gained traction in the French camp. Bourguiba was also busy trying the same with the French President in Switzerland, as well as asking for the release of prominent Algerian figures captured in 1956 like Ahmed Ben Bella. They successfully helped de Gaulle change his mind, and he entertained the idea of negotiating with the Algerians.⁵⁰³

Chapter VI: Senegal Builds a Coalition Around Important and Lasting Principles

This chapter traces the remarkable developments of Senegal's isolation in African affairs after Senghor's failed project of the Mali Federation in the summer of 1960 and provides the important context to understand why Africa became split in rival groups from 1960-2. For many states in West and North Africa, the growing anti-colonial character of the foreign policies of states, which now included Ghana, Egypt, Guinea, and Mali, became a problem as they caused tensions to rise. The most detailed narrative available of the divide and coming together of the two main African political groupings in the prelude to the May 1963 summit in Addis Ababa is

⁵⁰¹ "République tunisienne: Le Président. Monsieur Léopold Sédar Senghor, Président de la République du Sénégal. Tunis, le 18 janvier 1961." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 149.

⁵⁰² "N. 52/PCM/CAB/S. Dakar, le 2 janvier 1961." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 149.

⁵⁰³ "Bref Procès-verbal de la rencontre entre M. Gabriel d'Arboussier, Ministre de la Justice du Sénégal et M. Masmoudi, Ministre de l'Information de Tunisie," and "Note pour le Président Senghor – Président de la République." Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, Folder VP 149.

W. Scott Thompson's account, built on unprecedented primary sources from the Ghanaian foreign ministry and interviews with the politicians involved. Given his heavy use of Ghanaian documents, Thompson's narrative attributes the death of the Casablanca Group to Nkrumah's own domestic failings which caused the slow pace and erratic nature of his foreign policy from 1960-2. As a result, Nkrumah suddenly found himself surpassed by the speed of events unfolding, was increasingly isolated, and therefore found it very difficult to effect any form of change in African affairs.⁵⁰⁴ Thompson also notes that a contributing factor was Nkrumah's further isolation from other African states after the demise of the union he had created with what he thought were his closest allies, Mali and Guinea, right after the August 1962 assassination attempt on Nkrumah in northern Ghana. Fearing for his security, Nkrumah began to distance himself more from other heads of state and rudely rebuffed a visit from Keita and Touré which killed their friendship.⁵⁰⁵ Thompson states in his book that the assassination attempt revived Nkrumah's desire to pursue his pan-African policy, but as a result of these reasons, the main thrust of the drive towards African unity shifted away from Accra to "Addis Ababa, Dar-es-Salaam, and other capitals."⁵⁰⁶ Thompson can certainly be forgiven for coming to this conclusion because of his reliance on Ghanaian sources which confirmed this was the perspective from the point of view of Accra.⁵⁰⁷ Finally, Thompson's Ghana-centric narrative posits that the dividing factor in African politics was the Congo Crisis because their response split the African states into two camps.⁵⁰⁸

This chapter challenges Thompson's assessment of events in this period. As some of the previous chapters have highlighted, fissures between African states had been building since April 1958, and the rift only grew during the Mauritanian recognition crisis. While Thompson is partly correct, the Congo Crisis was a dividing issue in Africa but it was only a major issue of any significance to Ghana and Egypt. The rift between African states was not caused by a single crisis, but by collection of issues built up over three years of state interaction towards the same desire. All African states had shown they held one common goal - to establish some sort of

⁵⁰⁴ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966*, 178, 267, 424.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 268.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 429.

⁵⁰⁷ The Ghanaian leader was completely taken by surprise in the summer of 1962 when he'd heard Guinea and Ethiopia planned a summit to bridge the divide in African affairs without being consulted. The detailed story is covered in this chapter.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 429.

platform for common action to guide the continent out of its colonial period. At the heart of the dispute was not the goal, but the means to reach that goal. That disagreement was the dividing factor as Francophone African states came together from late 1960 to 1961 against Ghanaian, Egyptian, Moroccan, and Malian foreign policy tactics which had undermined their governments' legitimacy. This was the factor for the serious change in momentum in late 1960 whereby the main thrust of building a system of continental cooperation changed not from Accra to Addis Ababa or Dar-es-Salaam, but rather to the Francophone African states who spearheaded a movement to create a platform for intercontinental cooperation based on a code of conduct regulating African affairs and the right of each to decide on its development policy.

Evidence from the Senegalese archives and the Francophone group of African states therefore provides a much different picture of African affairs in this period and shows that Thompson made the same critical mistake as Nkrumah. Both drastically under-appreciated the role of the former states of the AOF and AEF in African politics in 1960-2, which wrenched away the momentum for African unity away from the radical states to take control of it themselves.⁵⁰⁹ Led by Senegal, the Francophone African states were the major catalyst for the shift in the balance in African affairs after they formed the Brazzaville Group in 1960. Several factors drove the ex-AOF and AEF states to create a new and dominant grouping of states based on a cluster of principles that lay the basis of the OAU Charter. Outside of Ghana, Egypt, Morocco, Guinea, and Mali many African states grew tired the constant disrespect of other states' borders, particularly exemplified in the case of Mauritania, and did not identify with the need to toe the line on a radical anti-colonial policy because they had a stake in creating ties with a reformed Europe. Thus, in the winter of 1960, Léopold Senghor began to corral his fellow Francophone African leaders together for regular meetings and together they decided to create an alternative platform to confront Africa's post-colonial future based on a guiding set of principles to regulate their relations. Originally agreed by twelve Francophone African states, support for this platform quickly grew in Arab and Anglophone African states, easily overpowering the support of only six African states gathered at Casablanca in January 1961. It was because of the success of this new platform and the Francophone African states' negotiations for development aid with the EEC that Nkrumah lost support from what he thought were his two closest allies,

⁵⁰⁹ The politics and relations of the Francophone states, when not absent altogether, resides in the periphery of Thompson's account, showing the Nkrumah was not watching the Francophone states closely.

Guinea and Mali, who began to mediate with the other side. Lastly, and also very importantly, the end of the Algerian conflict finally severed the ties binding the Casablanca Group together.

Senghor and the Aftermath of the Mali Split: Re-Forging Unity from Isolation

The wake of the split of the Mali Federation in the summer of 1960 left Léopold Senghor and the newly independent country of Senegal deeply isolated in Africa and compromised domestically. With Mali now steering towards Ghana and Guinea, this left Senghor no choice but to explore the potential for new and more distant relationships. Domestically Senghor found himself becoming more and more isolated too as his once promised beginnings of African unity collapsed with the Mali Federation. The popularity of Senegal's youth, symbolised by the radical PAI, would remain a menace for Senghor and his government despite its official ban as its members simply established bases for their propaganda efforts in more radical states.⁵¹⁰ Striving towards a new form of unity to make good on his promises and consolidate his position at home thus became his main foreign policy goal. Apart from finding a new ally in Tunisia as both stepped in to help the fledgling state of Mauritania, his only option was to turn to his old rivals from the days of the French-speaking *Communauté*. Luckily for Senghor, he hedged his bets as he felt a rise in tensions between the Senegalese and Sudanese leaderships in July 1960 and reached out to his largest rival in secret. According to an important political figure from Dahomey, Albert Tévoédjrè, Senghor sent an emissary to Dahomey, then part of the rival alliance of the *Conseil de l'Entente*, to deliver an urgent request to the Ivorian leader Félix Houphouët-Boigny who was visiting. To the countries of the entente (Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Niger, and Upper Volta), Senghor proposed forming a larger grouping of Francophone African states.⁵¹¹ Every leader of the entente believed it to be a good idea, at least in part because they felt a great deal of nostalgia for colonial times when they formed a proper "club" at the Palais Bourbon in Paris and met to exchange ideas and tactics. With every leader of these states on board, Senghor began to break through the isolation and a conference was called to bring all

⁵¹⁰ PAI members even made it to Congo-Leopoldville where they printed and spread propaganda leaflets to embarrass Senghor and torpedo his position on the Congo Crisis. Then leader, Cyrille Adoula, sent complaints of infringing on Congo's sovereignty to the Senegalese Government. See, "N. 1083/62. Léopoldville, le 1er mars 1962. Objet: M. A. Gizenga." Folder VP 148, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵¹¹ Tévoédjrè eventually succeeded Senghor as Secretary-General of the UAM and was well informed in inter-African politics. Albert Tévoédjrè, *Pan-Africanism in Action: An Account of the UAM* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Center for International Affairs, 1965), 10-1.

Francophone African leaders to discuss the state of African affairs in Abidjan in October 1960.⁵¹²

Aside from nostalgia for a time lost, some of the countries of the *Conseil de l'Entente* were also motivated by other important reasons. For one, and as the latter part of the chapter will show, they stood to create larger leverage in negotiations with France and the rest of Europe for development aid. Secondly, and according to the topics discussed in Abidjan, they were not at all pleased with the way inter-African affairs were waged. All wanted to see change on this front. Senegal was not the only country affected by the recklessness of one of its neighbours. The Ivory Coast also had a reckless neighbour in Ghana as Nkrumah flirted with the idea of supporting an ethnic group – the Sanwi people - that straddled the Ivorian-Ghanaian border. Echoing the ongoing claims of Ghana on parts of Togo's territory, Nkrumah was visited by a prominent leader of the Sanwi people who claimed their land should rightly be attached to, and ruled by, Ghana. Nkrumah did attempt to establish closer relations with Houphouët-Boigny to bring him into his sphere of interest at two meetings in August and September of 1960, but despite the veneer of cordiality between them, the Ivorian leader remained suspicious and began to use his foreign policy against his neighbour. Days after their last meeting, Houphouët-Boigny called for the francophone states to come together for a conference in Abidjan.⁵¹³ As for the other states of the entente, Upper Volta, and Dahomey were also in close proximity to Ghana and undoubtedly watched on in dismay that Nkrumah sought to gain Togo for his country and wanted to thwart Ghana's foreign policy. Houphouët-Boigny's influence on them, shown when he enticed them to join his entente over the Mali Federation, also suggest why they would not turn down the Ivory Coast's direction in African politics. In the wake of the Mali Federation split, Senghor found new potential partners in African affairs.

Despite hitting the ground running in the African Scramble, the Abidjan Conference of the new independent Francophone African states was the first of a series of large steps forward with which they quickly overcame the gap they had with Ghana and Egypt. Over the next two years, the Francophone African states mounted a robust challenge, thanks to the sheer number of

⁵¹² Ibid.

⁵¹³ W. Scott Thompson wrote that Nkrumah was very optimistic that he could win the Ivory Coast over and even wrote a union agreement anticipating them to join. See, W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966*, 147-8.

states coming together as a group but also by their willingness to organise and build powerful and effective institutions together. In October 1960, a few months removed from the collapse of the Mali Federation, the Abidjan Conference drew an impressive crowd which rallied together nearly every Francophone African state, making it the first time that the leaders of ex-AOF and AEF states met one another since independence. The coming together of the heads of state of Senegal, Ivory Coast, Congo (Brazzaville), Dahomey, Upper Volta, Niger, Cameroon, as well as delegations from Mauritania, Gabon, the Central African Republic, Chad, and Mali (as reluctant observers) did much to signal to the rest of the continent that the old rivalries and divisions within Francophone Africa were coming to an end. The three days of talks were designed to create a round table on pressing common African issues like Mauritania, the war in Algeria, and the Congo Crisis.⁵¹⁴

The conference yielded an important joint communique: not only did the attendees agree to harmonise their foreign policies to confront international issues (instructions were to be sent to their UN delegations for common action); they also decided they would come together on African ones beginning with supporting Mauritania's upcoming independence.⁵¹⁵ It also emerged during these talks that all participants wanted and vowed to meet together in similar conferences regularly.⁵¹⁶ It was a resounding success for all involved, yet Senghor emerged as a clear victor because he could once again claim domestically that his country was striving toward some form of unity. As a result of his canvassing of the idea, he brought together the Francophone African states and they had vowed to act in concert on common issues. Most importantly, however, this conference was an important turning point in inter-African politics because the recognition and support for Mauritania's independence in the face of Moroccan claims on its territory was the first time that so many states expressed the principle of respecting the integrity of existing territorial borders. This declaration, which naturally enraged the Moroccan King, was responsible for Mohammed V's call for a rival conference to convene in Casablanca early in 1961 as he sought to rally support for his claim.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁴ Maurice Ligot et Guy Devernois, *L'Union Africaine et Malgache* (Paris: Librairie Générale de Droit et de Jurisprudence, 1962), 321. Book found in the folder Dossier Unité Africaine, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵¹⁵ "AFP84. Le communiqué final de la conférence des états africains indépendants d'expression française." Folder VP 162, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵¹⁶ Maurice Ligot et Guy Devernois, *L'Union Africaine et Malgache*.

⁵¹⁷ Hella Pick, "The Brazzaville Twelve," *Africa South*, Vol. 6, No. 5 (1961): 79.

Francophone African leaders' efforts accelerated soon after the conference in Abidjan as they strove to build on the progress achieved and because several issues, like the Algerian conflict, had been discussed but not conclusively. Thus, less than two months later the leaders of almost every state that participated in Abidjan (minus Mali this time but including Philibert Tsiranana of Madagascar) held another important series of talks in Brazzaville, Congo, which was to give them the namesake of the Brazzaville Group. The object of the Brazzaville Conference of December 1960 was to forge new progress on the way to a narrower definition of African unity by cooperation founded on a few vague principles – 'good neighbourliness', the expansion of culture, and a respect for a community of interests.⁵¹⁸ The final resolutions of the conference – given their breadth – demonstrate that the twelve states had shared many common concerns and one common desire to cooperate to overcome them. First and foremost, the Brazzaville Group declared their belief in the principle of non-interference in other's internal affairs. Mutual respect for the sovereignty of each member was primordial, and they further stipulated that one's sovereignty could never be contested.⁵¹⁹ The twelve states also vowed to work towards economic, defence, and cultural cooperation, to solidify their ties to France, and to formulate a concerted foreign policy to face international affairs. One of their first acts in common was to fire a warning shot to their ideological rivals, Nkrumah, Nasser, and Mohammed V over their strong policy in the Congo Crisis. The twelve announced that they would bind together in a strong African Bloc at the UN and support the latter's attempts to find a solution to the crisis, instead of meddling in it to support Patrice Lumumba. Whilst not naming them outright, the twelve accused "certain Afro-Asian States" of creating the opportunity for one of the rival superpowers to "recolonize the Congo-Leopoldville." Tainting Ghana, Egypt, and Morocco with the crime of helping colonialism was a serious accusation and gave them another reason to form the rival Casablanca Group.⁵²⁰ The twelve also indicated the means to these ends were to begin to build effective and lasting institutions.⁵²¹ So enthralled they were to get going that the conference set the task of studying how to build these institutions to a committee of nominated delegates at a conference in Dakar the following month.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid, 321.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid, and Albert Tévoédjrè, *Pan-Africanism in Action: An Account of the UAM*, 11.

⁵²⁰ Ibid, 12, 12n.

⁵²¹ Maurice Ligot et Guy Devernois, *L'Union Africaine et Malgache*, 321-2, and Hella Pick, "The Brazzaville Twelve," 79.

Since the conference was proposed and finally agreed to take place in Dakar in January 1961, Senghor tried to give the project a nudge in the right direction as he assigned Mamadou Dia to give the inaugural address. Dia reminded the other delegations that it was their mandate to begin to forge unity and assured them that it would never come at the cost of losing their personality and independence. In clear barbs to their rivals, the Casablanca Group, Dia stated that this institution would not engage in propaganda campaigns and preach empty slogans reliant on the vilification of ‘neo-colonialism’ because this could never be enough for Africa to build its future and build anything concrete. Before they could build a new set of institutions to ensure their cooperation as mandated, all members of the Brazzaville Group had to come to an agreement on a development policy.⁵²² Recommendations were then sent to their heads of state for discussion before they were scheduled to meet a few weeks later in March in Yaoundé, Cameroon. The Yaoundé Conference yielded the group’s first important treaty, which established a new institution of economic cooperation bringing together its members: the Afro-Malagasy Economic Cooperation Organisation (OAMCE). The OAMCE was an important economic organ tasked with organising the economic cooperation of the group, as well as harmonising policies of development, industrial and agricultural policies, and systems of exchange with the goal of bringing about a better standard of living for their peoples.⁵²³ In this regard the OAMCE was an effective institution. During the Francophone African states’ negotiations with the EEC in 1960-2, the work of the OAMCE was highly praised by the European negotiators for its efforts at harmonising their economic policies because it made it much easier for the EEC to trade with them.⁵²⁴ Just as Dia expressed a few weeks earlier, the treaty stated that all of the signatories respected the sovereignty of each state and that the OAMCE not a “supra-national’ organisation and membership did not come at the cost of relinquishing any form sovereignty. The OAMCE, the treaty stipulated, was only created in the spirit and will of the signatories to harmonise their economic policies. Furthermore, its members did not envision the organisation as on restricted to states of the former French empire, but as

⁵²² “Déclaration du Président Mamadou Dia, Président du Conseil des Ministres de la République du Sénégal à la séance d’ouverture de la conférence du comité d’études des pays africains d’expression française.” Folder VP 162, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵²³ Maurice Ligot et Guy Devernois, *L’Union Africaine et Malgache*, 323.

⁵²⁴ “Conférence de l’Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne avec les Parlements d’États Africains et de Madagascar. Travaux de la Conférence, Maison de l’Europe Strasbourg 19-24 juin 1961.” Dossier Unité Africaine: Généralités (1960 à 1965), Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Dakar. See page 20 of the report.

open to any other African state wishing to join.⁵²⁵ It was an invitation that quickly got a response.

From Twelve to Twenty: The Spread of the Brazzaville Principles

The rapid pace with which the Brazzaville Group united together and its inclusive nature attracted much attention from the rest of the continent and permitted its foundations to expand outward into Anglophone Africa and North Africa to create the Monrovia Group in May 1961. There is some confusion in the scholarship as to the foundation of the Monrovia Group and its relationship to the Brazzaville Group. For instance, some scholars, notably Mohamed Saliou Camara and Michael Anda, posit that the Monrovia Group was a creation of Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone because they did not believe that the policies of the other two rival groups represented their interests.⁵²⁶ This is incorrect on two counts: for one, the Monrovia Conference, whose resolutions gave the group of states its namesake, was prompted by Senegal when it reached out to non-affiliated African states. Secondly, while some disagreement did arise between the Monrovia and Brazzaville Groups, they were contained to economic matters, which all parties chose to ignore.⁵²⁷ In reality, these disagreements never formed a barrier against them combining into one to rival the Casablanca Group because they both felt the same about African affairs. The Monrovia Conference came about as a result of an urgent request by Senegal on behalf of the other eleven Brazzaville states in February 1961 to hold a conference rallying African states to form a common policy on the deepening Congo Crisis. The Senegalese Government had just been informed that the United States was about to try to manage the conflict at the UN Security Council, well away from the General Assembly. This threatened to take away any influence on resolving the conflict, which was an African issue, from the African

⁵²⁵ “Ministère des Affaires Étrangères: Direction des Affaires Politiques. Note sur les Regroupements Interafricains.” Folder VP 146, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵²⁶ Mohamed Saliou Camara, *Political History of Guinea since World War Two* (New York: Peter Lang, 2014), 185, and Michael Anda, *International Relations in Contemporary Africa* (New York: University Press of America, 2000), 89.

⁵²⁷ In an internal Senegalese Foreign Ministry reports dated in January 1962, it is written that the conference of economic experts mandated by the Monrovia Conference to find common ground to hash out an economic agreement came to naught. The leaders of all the Monrovia Group purposefully gave no directives and goals to their delegations, therefore guaranteeing the resolutions and recommendations would be vague and non-operative; this was hinted that the leaders saw too many divergences over economic matters and chose to ‘kick the can down the road.’ See, “Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, Dakar,” and “Conférence des Experts Africains et Malgaches du 17 juillet 1961.” Folder VP 146, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

states which was unacceptable to the Brazzaville Group. Thus, Senegal wished to know if either Liberia, Nigeria, or Togo (since they were not affiliated to either group) would be ready to quickly host a conference with all African states present so they could devise the best way to counter the efforts of the United States.⁵²⁸

This meeting never took place, but the correspondence continued and the idea of hosting a large conference was kept alive because a new call arose soon after.⁵²⁹ A few weeks later President Tubman of Liberia, with the backing of Senegal, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, and Togo invited all independent African states to come to Monrovia in the second week of May to discuss a much wider range of issues than the Congo Crisis and help heal the divide between the Casablanca and Brazzaville groups. Even Guinea and Mali showed interest, but ultimately declined to attend under pressure from Nasser and Nkrumah. In a small blow to the Casablanca group, Libya, one of the Casablanca founding members, decided to defect by going to Monrovia because it watched the group's conduct with growing dismay.⁵³⁰ From 8 to 12 May 1961 the Brazzaville Group and an additional eight independent African states (Liberia, Tunisia, Sierra Leone, Libya, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Togo) discussed the need to regulate the problematic state of inter-African relations. The four issues set on the agenda were thus to find "the means of promoting better understanding and cooperation toward achieving unity in Africa," a discussion about "the threats to peace and stability in Africa," the potential of establishing an institution to regulate problems and issues between African states, and finally, the ways in which Africa could contribute to world peace.⁵³¹

The Monrovia Conference paved the way for the Addis Ababa summit of May 1963 more than any other conference held between 1958 and 1962. This was for two reasons: the sheer number of states that combined to agree with the resolutions, twenty in all, and because the OAU could trace the genesis of its principles to Monrovia. Despite regretting that the Casablanca Group declined to attend, the twenty attendees made remarkable progress and made an important

⁵²⁸ "N. 61/CAB/S. Lettre envoyée aux 11 états de Brazzaville. Dakar, le 8 fevr. 1961," and "République Togo à Président Senghor Dakar." Folder 24, Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963), National Archives of Senegal.

⁵²⁹ The paper trail of their correspondence was unfortunately incomplete as many documents were missing from the folder.

⁵³⁰ Albert Tévoédjrè, *Pan-Africanism in Action: An Account of the UAM*, 12, 12n.

⁵³¹ Carol A. Johnson, "African Political Groupings: Monrovia Powers," *International Organization*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1962): 439-440.

stand in African affairs by signing many resolutions which were the very antithesis of the Casablanca Charter. These resolutions formed the codification of a rulebook of acceptable conduct for African states in their relations with each other and tantamount to a complete rejection of what leaders like Nkrumah and Nasser (and by extension, the Casablanca Group) stood for:

“1. Absolute equality of the African and Malagasy states no matter the importance of their territories, the density of their populations, the volume of their resources; 2. Non-interference in the domestic affairs of the states; 3. Respect for the sovereignty of each state and its inalienable right to existence and to the development of its personality; 4. Formally condemns the establishment of subversive bases helped by independent states; 5. The instauration of a cooperation on the basis of African dimensions and based on tolerance, solidarity, relations based on mutual respect, periodic exchanges of views and the refusal of any form of [single] leadership; 6. The unity aimed at this moment is not the political integration of the sovereign African states, but the unity of aspirations and considered actions on a converging basis of social solidarity and African policy.”⁵³²

The twenty states assembled at Monrovia also agreed to band together at the UN “to fight for common international issues” and to force the UN Security Council to admit Mauritania as a member.⁵³³ Material and moral assistance was also pledged to all territories still under colonialism (including Angola), but on the topic of the Algerian conflict the Francophone states had more sway and forced the others to issue a resolution protecting France. As a result, the conference only implored both the Algerians and the French to negotiate an end to the war. The Monrovia Conference also pledged its total support to the efforts of the UN to resolve the Congo Crisis and in an attack on the Casablanca Group, called on the African states to resist the temptation of recognising and supporting rival secessionist Congolese groups.⁵³⁴

On 12 May 1961, twenty African states stood up together and delivered a large message to their continent and to the world and it radically altered the African political landscape. The signing of the resolutions of Monrovia by a group of twenty Arab, Anglophone, and Francophone African states tipped the balance of the inter-group rivalry firmly to the side of the Monrovia Group. Given the balance was twenty states against five (six with the GPRA), it was only a matter of time for the ties holding the Casablanca Group together to begin to fray. Apart

⁵³² “CHAS/26. Monrovia, Libéria, 12 mai 1961.” Folder Unité Africaine Généralités (1960 à 1965), National Archives of Senegal.

⁵³³ Ibid.

⁵³⁴ Ibid, and Carol A. Johnson, “African Political Groupings: Monrovia Powers,” 441.

from the overwhelming continental support for the principles of the Monrovia Conference, two very important factors caused two more states to defect from the Casablanca Group. In 1961-2, the continued march forward of the Brazzaville states towards erecting effective institutions and the end of the Algerian War brought Guinea and Mali not only close to the Brazzaville Group, but actively undermined the Casablanca Group, and Nkrumah and Nasser's efforts to dominate African international relations.

Building Organisations, Building Envy: From the Brazzaville Group to the UAM

Fuelled by the desire to cement their power at home by proving to their citizens that they could be trusted to lead their states in overcoming problems inherited from the colonial past, Francophone African heads of state like Senghor rushed ahead to build meaningful institutions of economic, political, and socio-cultural cooperation. Reeling from the successful foundation of the OAMCE and the Monrovia Conference's resolutions, the Brazzaville Group's members met in July 1961 in Madagascar to concretise their stance by founding a new institution of inter-state cooperation. Named the African and Malagasy Union (UAM), the new organisation was created by a charter with a rigid structure to ensure the smooth cooperation of its members. At the same time, the Francophone's solidifying ties to the Monrovia conference was recognised in a UAM declaration describing it as one circle within the larger circle of the Monrovia Group.⁵³⁵ The UAM's members were obliged to meet every six months for summits to discuss outstanding issues, policies, and common objectives as well as vote on the adoption of resolutions. An administrative seat, headed by an interim then a nominated Secretary-General, was established in Cotonou to oversee the work of sub-committees on implementing any adopted resolutions. The UAM charter stipulated that all members would combine as a group at the UN to act in concert on international and African issues.⁵³⁶ Naturally, the cost of running an institution of this scope would be quite high, so the members decided that they would pay according to their means. Unlike in the Casablanca group, the members of the UAM paid on time, every time.⁵³⁷ There is some evidence to suggest that there may have been some hesitation on the part of some about forming the UAM. Senegal, as the state most desperate to form a new bloc to break out of its

⁵³⁵ "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères: Direction des Affaires Politiques. Note sur les Regroupements Interafricains." Folder VP 146, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵³⁶ Guy Devernois, "The Evolution of the African and Malagasy Countries of French Civilisation," *Civilisations*, Vol.12, No. 1 (1962): 114-5, and Maurice Ligot et Guy Devernois, *L'Union Africaine et Malgache*, 323.

⁵³⁷ Albert Tévoédjrè, *Pan-Africanism in Action: An Account of the UAM*, 14.

isolation, pursued the idea of the UAM the hardest among the Twelve. As a result, and probably to ensure the other states came on board, Senghor offered to pay the most of any member despite Senegal not being the richest. Thus, Senegal offered paying for 18.5% of the costs, almost 2% higher than the richest Francophone African state, Ivory Coast.⁵³⁸ To no real surprise given his drive to create the UAM (and perhaps because he bore the highest cost), Léopold Senghor was entrusted by the others as the UAM's first Secretary-General to oversee its foundation.

The UAM was therefore designated the parent institution of the OAMCE (which was thus relegated to handle economic matters and the harmonisation of development policies) and of another new institution, the African and Malagasy Postal and Telecommunications Union (UAMPT). This institution, like the foundation of the inter-African airline (Air Afrique), was specifically designed to rearrange the vertical links tying the UAM states to Europe imposed on them by the colonial system into horizontal ties among African states. Prior to their establishment, any form of air travel or telecommunication was incredibly inefficient because of the need to go through the former metropole, France, just as in the colonial period.⁵³⁹ Not only were the UAMPT and Air Afrique designed to make air travel, postage, and communications more efficient in Africa by making them direct, the wide publicity they were afforded was designed to demonstrate that the UAM's leaders were abolishing the vestiges of colonialism and taking control back from the French on vital services. Another significant aspect of the UAM was its dual concern with external and domestic security to protect members from both foreign and internal threats. At Tananarive, the Twelve decided to sign a common defence pact which allowed the member states to take over the infrastructure and bodies inherited from the French armed forces. The pact also stipulated members would retain complete control of their own armed forces and unlike the Casablanca Charter, they would not be required to be handed over to a centralised command. Any form of combined military action would have to meet important conditions: every state needed to be satisfied of any claim that one member's national sovereignty or independence was truly under threat, and that the state under threat accepted the others' intervention. To reassure France of their good intentions, the UAM also explicitly stated

⁵³⁸ The figures eventually came out a few months later when ministers of finance came together to iron out the details. See, "Communication du Ministre des Finances en Conseil des Ministres sur la Conférence de Dakar des 4 et 5 décembre [1961] des États de l'Union Africain et Malgache." Sub-folder UAM 1961, folder Dossier Unité Africaine, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵³⁹ Albert Tévoédjrè, *Pan-Africanism in Action: An Account of the UAM*, 16-7.

in its defence pact that it in no way voided any bilateral military agreements it had with its members.⁵⁴⁰

The most important part of the defence pact, however, was the work the UAM members were doing to come up with a working definition of ‘subversion’ and the steps they could take to insulate their regimes from it. According to a secret UAM report, a committee of experts convened to consider the question noted that ‘subversion’ was not defined across the UAM. The term, they argued, should be considered in its immediate sense of the reversal or stifling of the political order by internal or foreign agents acting against the ruling governments. Under this definition, the report declared the foreign policies of Ghana and Egypt of being guilty of activities helping subversion and the manipulation of domestic forces in other African states.⁵⁴¹ A very crucial security problem to tackle was preventing subversion in UAM states by neutralising the efforts of some of their citizens (identified by the experts as students, intellectual elites, workers, and rural figures) who were liable to support subversive organisations or governments abroad. Once identified, preventing them from going abroad to subversive conferences and meetings was a priority.⁵⁴² Out of all the potential threats identified by the experts, students were the most likely to engage in subversion, and the committee gave several recommendations to UAM heads of state. Since students going abroad to study were likely to come into contact with foreign ideologies, it was up to the UAM to create its own countervailing ideology to counteract their effect. Given the propensity of subversive student unions abroad, UAM student unions needed to be set up with mandatory registration for UAM nationals to serve as a transmission belt for its own ideology, and to assist them with the adjustment of living abroad. Lastly, the UAM could create an intelligence apparatus to monitor them, or even better, gain informants from their own ranks to monitor them whilst they studied abroad.⁵⁴³

⁵⁴⁰ Guy Devernois, “The Evolution of the African and Malagasy Countries of French Civilisation,” *Civilisations*, Vol.12, No. 1 (1962): 114-5, and Maurice Ligot et Guy Devernois, *L’Union Africaine et Malgache*, 324.

⁵⁴¹ “Union Africaine et Malgache – Note de Défense. La Subversion.” Sub-folder UAM 1961, folder Dossier Unité Africaine, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵⁴² Ibid.

⁵⁴³ Ibid. This last idea came up once more in a UAM summit in September 1962, and it was proposed that a sort of ‘INTERPOL’ be created to monitor potential subversive nationals. See, “Conférence des Chefs d’État et de Gouvernement de l’U.A.M., Libreville (10 au 13 Septembre 1962), Commission des Affaires Politiques, Culturelles et Sociales.” Folder VP 163, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

Overall, the UAM was a very well-organised and run institution, particularly when compared with the Casablanca Group. Unlike the ad hoc and clumsy Casablanca Group's attempts to cooperate, the members of the UAM took their membership extremely seriously and made it effective. As the second part of this chapter will show, the OAMCE's foundation was a crucial step towards the harmonisation of economic policies and made it much easier for its members to negotiate and secure a new postcolonial economic aid agreement with European states. The UAMPT and the defence agreement helped the member states insulate their regimes by abolishing the vertical ties they had with the former colonial metropole, and by designing joint strategies and cooperative mechanisms to identify and root out potential subversive elements. What of its record with cooperation on African affairs? Albert Tévoédjrè, its second Secretary-General, wrote in 1965 that the UAM failed because it did not always achieve what it was ultimately designed to do – to manage issues through the UAM framework without any recourse to external assistance. As one of a few examples, Tévoédjrè points to the UAM's charter and its duty to come to the material aid of colonised peoples and movements of national liberation in Africa. Whilst diplomatic aid was given by the UAM, not a single Franc went to them and this role was later deferred in May 1963 to Algeria, Guinea, and Ghana.⁵⁴⁴

To judge the success of the UAM on this factor alone is unfair because it did achieve remarkable things in African affairs. The UAM did achieve some conflict resolution internally without external aid. In the fall of 1962, for instance, a spat erupted between Gabon and Cameroon as each failed to protect the others' citizens living in their countries from violence. As a result of pressure from the other ten UAM states, the Gabonese and Cameroonian leaders were forced to attend an extraordinary meeting to let off some steam and the others finally made them come to an agreement to stop the violence.⁵⁴⁵ On African affairs, the UAM states were also well-coordinated and formed a common front. A key component of this success was the level of communication between them; whenever something of note happened to one of them, they immediately informed the head of the UAM who would relay it to the whole.⁵⁴⁶ Prior to General

⁵⁴⁴ Albert Tévoédjrè, *Pan-Africanism in Action: An Account of the UAM*, 18-9.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid, 31-8.

⁵⁴⁶ A good example was Madagascar's invitation to attend a conference of the Casablanca states in early 1962. President Tsiranana informed Senghor that he had received the invitation and explained he would boycott it in line with their policy to support Mauritania. The message was then passed along. "13/PC/CCC. Dakar, le 6 janvier 1962," and "14/PC/CCC. Dakar, le 6 janvier 1962." Folder VP 164, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

Assemblies, the UAM states would meet and decide together on common action. For example, the UAM members agreed in Libreville in September 1962 to act together and sent specific instructions to their delegations at the upcoming UN General Assembly on the issues of Angola, South Africa, and the other Portuguese colonies.⁵⁴⁷ They also acted in concert when it came to their relations with the other states of the Monrovia Group. Nigeria, before it hosted the second Monrovia Group conference in early 1962, added the GPRA to the list of its observers. Given the UAM's position on supporting France and its stand on the Casablanca Group, Houphouët-Boigny wrote to Senghor and others, suggesting they appeal to Nigeria to revoke its invitation to the GPRA. The UAM members agreed unanimously and Senghor sent a message to the Nigerian leader who responded by saying he had never invited them and that it had all been a misunderstanding.⁵⁴⁸ There were hardly any surprise foreign policy moves after decisions were taken in concert. When there were inklings that some of the members might make a move conflicting with others' interests or views, they were urged to get back in line. As Senghor argued as his leadership of the UAM ended at the Bangui UAM Conference of March 1962, it was their common policy moves that had secured Mauritania's UN membership and their common efforts that were yielding success in their negotiations with the EEC. The UAM states also believed that their resolutions and combined diplomacy was a factor in forcing France to come to terms with the Algerians.⁵⁴⁹

The Offer they Couldn't Refuse: Francophone Africa's Gravitation to a New Europe

As this dissertation has argued, Senegal's Léopold Senghor made the case repeatedly that his country needed conserve ties to France in order to prosper and bring the Senegalese population to a better standard of living. One of the breaking points of the Mali Federation was over this issue as Modibo Keita's Sudanese faction of the Federation ramped up its attacks on the French over their nuclear testing in North Africa and their continued military conflict with the Algerians. Apart from his clear Francophile tendencies, why did Senghor join other ex-AOF

⁵⁴⁷ "Conférence des Chefs d'État et de Gouvernement de l'U.A.M., Libreville (10 au 13 Septembre 1962), Commission des Affaires Politiques, Culturelles et Sociales." Folder VP 163, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵⁴⁸ See, "14/PC/CCC. Dakar, le 6 janvier 1962," and "460 – 5 janvier 1962 – Lagos." Folder VP 164, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵⁴⁹ *Nations Nouvelles, Organe de Liaison de l'Union Africaine et Malgache (U.A.M.): Résolutions de Bangui 25-27 mars, Résolutions politiques et économiques.* Folder Dossier Unité Africaine, National Archives of Senegal.

leaders in insisting on maintaining a strong relationship with France? Unlike the British colonies, the French colonies witnessed an important change in their relations with their metropole in March 1957 when the 'Six' of Europe (France, West Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy) signed the Treaty of Rome. This treaty, designed to foster European integration, also made economic provisions for the members' dependent territories because of their strong economic reliance to the metropolises. Thus, under the Treaty of Rome, these territories were made associated members of the European Economic Community (EEC), a status which privileged the French territories immensely. Despite not being included in the negotiations of the Treaty of Rome, the EEC and the Six pledged to assist the associated territories with trade and development, which offered them significant potential. Under the treaty, they not only enjoyed access to the European Common Market, but also guaranteed prices for their goods in the Common Market (which were more favourable than world market prices) and the protection of their own nascent industries from the might of European business with the right to raise their own tariffs. Another important provision of the treaty which benefitted the associated territories was the \$581 million dollars that the European Investment Fund earmarked for development aid. From 1957 to 1962, almost all these funds were used for infrastructure projects like roads, hospitals, education, and irrigation in the associated states.⁵⁵⁰

Despite some early misgivings from some of the Six about bringing African territories into an associative relationship with the EEC⁵⁵¹, one of the negotiators of this agreement said that the growing relationship between the EEC and the associated territories had "been much more favorable than the negotiators of the treaty ever dared to hope" as confidence grew between their cooperation.⁵⁵² As a result of benefitting economically from the relationship and the growing trust between them and the EEC, when the French territories declared their independence in 1960 they immediately requested an extension of their status which the EEC granted until a new

⁵⁵⁰ Jacob J. van der Lee, "Community Economic Relations with Associated African States and Other Countries," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 348 (July 1963): 15, 16-7, 18.

⁵⁵¹ Most notably West Germany, which had little economic interests in Francophone Africa and had to foot the majority share of \$200 of the \$581 million for aid. The West German government, however, in the spirit of fostering European unity acquiesced to the French and its territories. See, Tom Soper, "The EEC and Aid to Africa," *International Affairs*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (1965): 466.

⁵⁵² Jacob J. van der Lee, "Community Economic Relations with Associated African States and Other Countries," 18. Van der Lee, it is important to point out, was an insider to the EEC's relationship with Africa as he had been involved in all of the negotiations.

agreement could be negotiated and finalised.⁵⁵³ From the summer of 1960 to December 1962 the character of the relationship and the tone of negotiations changed as the former French territories finally became included in the negotiations instead of being represented by France on their behalf as in 1956-7. This altered the character of the negotiations because the associated African states wanted important assurances from the European Six which would carefully spell out the basis of their cooperation. Several meetings were held in 1960-1 between representatives of the EEC, the European Parliamentary Assembly, and the parliaments of the associated states.⁵⁵⁴ By the June 1961 meeting in Strasbourg this basis was ironed out. As recent victims of European colonialism, the associated African states had legitimate concerns; what they wanted was the assurance that they would not become victims of a new form of economic colonialism and lose their independence.

At the June 1961 summit in Strasbourg, the EEC affirmed that its members now recognised all nations as equals and that any links between the EEC and the new African states needed to be founded on the principle of guaranteeing their independence. Furthermore, the EEC respected the right of African states to assert their “African personality,” understood to mean their own political direction in the future, and that their aid would not conceal any form of political-economic ideology.⁵⁵⁵ Members of the European Parliamentary Assembly, notably its President, Hans Furler, France’s René Pleven, and the Netherlands’ Goes van Naters gave their assurances that their negotiations would end in a reform of the vertical links tying African states to Europe, vouching that the Six would not force upon them any political programme and that they would not be required to take a stand in Europe’s ideological conflicts. Since the associated African states had voiced concerns, in their first negotiations with the Six the year before, that a new agreement with the EEC could be a “Trojan Horse” for neo-colonialism, the Six explained that they were not trying to repackage an agreement for the political and economic advantages they gained during colonialism. What the Six genuinely desired, they said, was for other states to

⁵⁵³ Ibid, 17.

⁵⁵⁴ Guinea was a notably absent because France had cut all ties with the former colony in the fall of 1958. The other states from the former French Empire included Mali, Senegal, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Dahomey, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Togo, and Upper Volta.

⁵⁵⁵ “Conférence de l’Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne avec les Parlements d’États Africains et de Madagascar. Travaux de la Conférence, Maison de l’Europe Strasbourg 19-24 juin 1961.” Dossier Unité Africaine: Généralités (1960 à 1965), Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Dakar. See pages 3,5, 8, and 21 of the report.

be able to profit from Europe's economic, social, and cultural resurgence.⁵⁵⁶ By late 1962, the Six had convinced the associated African states of their good intentions. Finally signed by all parties in December 1962, the new agreement included an expansion to their development aid, \$800 million for the years 1963-8, as well as the right to expand this aid to include loans as well as infrastructure projects.⁵⁵⁷ The associated African states' certainly appeased because of the promises that no ideological commitments would be demanded for the aid, but there was also an added layer of security because they knew of the amounts the EEC had available for them.⁵⁵⁸ This agreement provided certain advantages for the associated states like providing scholarship for African students so they could gain instruction in Europe and form their country's cadres instead of seeing European technicians flooding Africa as they had during the colonial period.⁵⁵⁹ Another factor helping the associated states to sign on to the agreement was the Six's commitment that they would not decide on their own where resources would be allocated; decisions would instead be taken together as equals.⁵⁶⁰

The character of the negotiations also changed from those of 1956-7 because the European Six altered their requests according to the unfolding political situation in Africa with more and more states becoming independent. This agreement was very generous given the sums involved for African development and it was specifically designed to attract other African states, particularly Anglophone states, to join in. Enticing the others thus formed the largest demand from the European Six to the associated African states. The Six wanted to create a more favourable economic atmosphere conducive for the other African states to join.⁵⁶¹ West Germany, for instance, had more economic interests in Anglophone Africa than the ex-AOF and AEF and was therefore interested in promoting and developing them by bringing the other African states into the fold.⁵⁶² Undoubtedly due to their knowledge of Europe's colonial past, the

⁵⁵⁶ "Conférence de l'Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne avec les Parlements d'États Africains et de Madagascar. Travaux de la Conférence, Maison de l'Europe Strasbourg 19-24 juin 1961," 1, 3, 7, 15.

⁵⁵⁷ Jacob J. van der Lee, "Community Economic Relations with Associated African States and Other Countries," 22.

⁵⁵⁸ Tom Soper, "The EEC and Aid to Africa," 470.

⁵⁵⁹ The associated African states were totally against seeing European technicians coming to Africa to dictate policies dreamt up in Europe. See, "Conférence de l'Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne avec les Parlements d'États Africains et de Madagascar. Travaux de la Conférence, Maison de l'Europe Strasbourg 19-24 juin 1961," 8, 18.

⁵⁶⁰ Committees were also pledged to be formed by representatives of all states involved and these were to be sitting together in Europe in order to facilitate cooperation. See, *ibid*, 12, 42.

⁵⁶¹ Jacob J. van der Lee, "Community Economic Relations with Associated African States and Other Countries," 21,

⁵⁶² Tom Soper, "The EEC and Aid to Africa," 466.

Six were adamant that their economic aid and trade with African countries should not make them appear as creating favouritism and division on the African continent by supporting some and not others.⁵⁶³ Thus, they demanded changes to the 1957 agreement in the Treaty of Rome in their economic arrangements with associated states to even out the playing field between the associated and non-associated African states. For one, the new agreement of December 1962 reduced the preferential treatment for goods from associated states coming into EEC as had been established in 1957 by knocking down some common external tariffs with non-associated states. This was designed not only to prevent resentment from the non-associated states, but also ensured that the price of goods from the associated states would fall more in line with world prices. This agreement also embodied the belief that inter-African trade could flourish as the African states kept up their rhetoric of unity because it also allowed the associated states with the right of “establishing customs unions, free-trade areas, and other types of economic agreements [...] in the same geographical areas.”⁵⁶⁴ This was a dramatic change to the substance of the original relationship between the EEC and its affiliated African states and it was a large concession for the latter to acquiesce to. On the other hand, it was also in their interest not to cause resentment and alienate the Anglophone states after the progress made in building relations at the Monrovia Conference.⁵⁶⁵ Furthermore, forming a common link to Europe could be the antidote to the radical agenda the Casablanca Group was proposing. Thus, shortly after sealing the deal with the EEC, Senghor sent an appeal to the non-associated states to join into partnership with the EEC.⁵⁶⁶

The initial reception from former British territories, however, was not good. During the negotiations over the United Kingdom’s potential entry into the EEC in 1962, the Anglo-African states all voiced their opposition to joining with associated status “out of principle.”⁵⁶⁷ Scholars, however, have made the mistake of concluding that this refusal was final and that behind the

⁵⁶³ Jacob J. van der Lee, “Community Economic Relations with Associated African States and Other Countries,” 20-1, 23.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid, 21.

⁵⁶⁵ The Senegalese were aware of the potential resentment from fellow West African states. For instance, William Tubman, the Liberian President, warned his country during his January 1962 presidential address that he would follow the negotiations closely because of their potential to harm Liberia’s economy if the Common Market discriminated against Liberian goods. It is reasonable to assume other African states felt the same. See, “39/Conf. 15 janvier 1962. L’Ambassadeur du Sénégal au Libéria, Monrovia, à Son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères du Sénégal, Dakar.” VP 153, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵⁶⁶ Aaron Segal, “Africa Newly Divided?,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1964): 73.

⁵⁶⁷ Tom Soper, “The EEC and Aid to Africa,” 468-9.

façade of refusal was genuine interest. Aaron Segal, for instance, seemed to suggest that the complete opposition to entering the EEC was due to a feeling that joining would open the door to neo-colonialism. Nkrumah, for one, is cited as leading this opposition on the grounds that the EEC's invitation was "a special plea for collective colonialism of a new order."⁵⁶⁸ In his own draft and notes written around the same time, it is clear that Nkrumah saw the EEC-African relationship as a threat to his vision for Africa. Nkrumah described it as "economic imperialism" meant to ensnare the African states in a neo-colonial system: "the common market is a device for the collective exploitation of the less developed countries of Africa by the protagonists of neo-colonialism. It must be avoided like the plague."⁵⁶⁹ But while it is true that Nkrumah opposed the EEC's relationship with Africa, we cannot conclude that he persuaded others to think and act in like fashion. After all, states like Nigeria and Sierra Leone were members of the Monrovia Group. It is therefore plausible that the opposition from the Anglo-African states was for other reasons. Unlike the Francophone African states, they had not been in close contact with the EEC for the last six years and not much time was given for the Six to persuade them of their good intentions. Thus, their fears of opening a new door to economic colonialism were amply justifiable. Perhaps another contributing factor can explain their refusal to entertain the idea of joining. The British Government was also reaching a dead end in their negotiations to enter the EEC. Thus, it was inconceivable for the Anglo-African states to sabotage their relationship with the United Kingdom by openly opting for an agreement with the Six. None of the Anglo-African states ended up joining the EEC during this period for these reasons, but the EEC-African relationship nevertheless built an incredible amount of interest. By mid-1963 Nigeria had engaged in several talks with the EEC about joining, and by then Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda had also approached the EEC.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁸ Aaron Segal, "Africa Newly Divided?," 73.

⁵⁶⁹ *Africa Must Unite* (typed draft and notes in Nkrumah's own hand). Folder RG17-1-49A, RG17-1 Bureau African Affairs Collection. PRAAD.

⁵⁷⁰ It is rather perplexing that two scholars argued at length about the Anglo-African states' refusal to enter in negotiations in 1962 and yet provide no explanations for why several of them did end up negotiating with the EEC by the end of 1963. See, Aaron Segal, "Africa Newly Divided?," and Tom Soper, "The EEC and Aid to Africa," 473.

Mali and Guinea Cross the Picket Line: The Beginning of the End of the Casablanca Group's Cohesion

As the Francophone African states dashed ahead creating a set of cooperative institutions and negotiating an important development aid agreement with the EEC, two other ex-AOF states – Guinea and Mali – watched with interest from the sidelines. As the most radical anticolonial former AOF states, they had gravitated towards Ghana and then thrown their lot in with the Casablanca Group. Yet for all the attention this group gathered with its radical rhetoric, its members had not come any closer to building a set of institutions of cooperation and, as a consequence, were not able to attract any of the Monrovia states to join their side. The Casablanca group's statements of solidarity and unity, however, were masking discord and growing dismay from Mali and Guinea. In the latter's case, Sekou Touré began to feel that Nkrumah and Nasser were showing him a lack of respect as an equal, and he started to put in question his antagonistic stance against his neighbours to the north. From early 1961 to early 1962, Touré gradually improved his relations with Senghor and toyed with the idea of a new role for his country as a mediator between the African groups. In the case of Modibo Keita of Mali, his overtures to Ghana and his desire to embark on anticolonial crusade against France disguised divided loyalties. While it seemed that Keita had gambled away Mali's future by backing Ghana and the Casablanca Group, he had in fact hedged his bets. Unlike Guinea who opted out, his country had profited from being tied to the Treaty of Rome and could still benefit if it remained in the negotiations with the other Francophone countries. Even as the Mali Federation imploded, Keita kept his state in the negotiations with the EEC along with the other Francophone states. The combination of the prospect of aid from Europe and the end of an important event – the Algerian War – removed one of the largest fixations affecting Mali's foreign policy orientation. As France finally came to terms with Algeria, Keita realised there was no longer any point to remaining in the Casablanca Group and joined Touré in playing a mediation role.

Understanding Guinea's decision to leave the Casablanca Group in early 1962 requires looking at the context of its changing relations with an important member of the AOF, Senegal, and its ally from independence, Ghana. Independent Guinea was born of Touré's decision to defy de Gaulle and refuse his call to form a new association of states in West Africa in 1958. Whilst secretly harboring hope that he could maintain links with France, Touré fell under the pressure of

his party and advocated a strong anticolonial position rejecting any links with colonial powers. Seeing this as nothing short of betrayal, de Gaulle not only cut all ties to Guinea, but he also allowed his secret services to mount assassination attempts on the Guinean leader. These assassination attempts dramatically altered the relationships that Touré had with his two immediate neighbours – Senegal and Ivory Coast – because the French used these states as staging grounds for their attempts.⁵⁷¹ Thus, Touré began to see himself under siege from collaborationist and aggressive neighbours and his relations with them plummeted, causing him to get closer to more radical states like Ghana and to accept radical exiles from other Francophone states.⁵⁷² Despite his strong response, Touré did give himself room for future major policy reorientations. As part of his radical posture against colonial states, he entered the Ghana-Guinea Union and placed an item, article 34, in Guinea's own constitution allowing the government to surrender its entire sovereignty at the disposal of a larger whole. Yet, as his top diplomat, Diallo Telli, told the UN Secretary General at the time in confidence, he never seriously considered doing so.⁵⁷³ Unlike Nkrumah, Touré simply was not willing to commit his state to the fate of another.

There is also some evidence suggesting that Touré may have quickly regretted joining the Casablanca Group because of its lack of coordination and because not all members thought themselves equals. Mere weeks after attending the Casablanca Conference and signing the charter in January, Touré sent a scathing message to the group reminding them of their duties. Touré was irate because Nasser and Nkrumah had not bothered to consult either him or the others before laying down proposals for a solution to the Congo Crisis at the UN General Assembly in their name. In an obvious barb to Ghana and Egypt, he reminded everyone of their duty to consult each other to form a common policy or else risk fraying their ties.⁵⁷⁴ In 1961 Guinea also began to resent growing Ghanaian intransigence at its expense, particularly in their joint military mission in Congo. According to Achkar Marof, Guinea's ambassador in Accra at the time, Guinean objectives were often thwarted and superseded by the orders of a white

⁵⁷¹ Mohamed Saliou Camara, *Political History of Guinea since World War Two*, 138, 196-7.

⁵⁷² Ibid.

⁵⁷³ Ibid, 144-5, 184. Mohamed Camara notes that in a conversation with Dag Hammarskjöld, he asked the Guinean representative to the UN (who had negotiated with Ghana on the matter of establishing the union) Diallo Telli if Touré actually considered handing over Guinea's sovereignty to which Telli answered no.

⁵⁷⁴ "Télégramme Sékou Touré. Copie Télégramme du 14.2.61." Folder 24, Fonds de la Fédération du Mali (1959 – 1963), National Archives of Senegal.

commander in the Ghanaian armed forces. This caused a dramatic shift in how Touré perceived the reliability of his radical allies, and W. Scott Thompson marked it as the point that he began to nurture relations with the Monrovia states out of fear of eventual isolation in African affairs.⁵⁷⁵ What scholars have not uncovered, however, is evidence that there may have been an economic dimension to the rapprochement with the states of the former AOF. Touré had undoubtedly followed the Francophone states' negotiations with the EEC, and he was probably anxious to find his way aboard, particularly since the now cash-strapped Ghana had not yet given the majority of its promised 10 million Pound loan from 1958.⁵⁷⁶ What he needed was to initiate a thaw in relations with Senegal, and luckily, Senghor was willing.

In January 1961 Guinea and Senegal signed a commercial accord designed to get the two sides meeting regularly to discuss the problem of bilateral trade, and in November the two sides agreed to a comprehensive trade agreement along with a cultural accord.⁵⁷⁷ In the summer of 1961 Touré's tone changed dramatically in his correspondence with Senegalese officials, referring to the Senegalese ambassador to Conakry as his "dear friend" and to Senegal as Guinea's "sister state." In this correspondence Touré also relayed a message to Senghor hoping they could open a dialogue and expressing Guinea's feelings of genuine fraternity.⁵⁷⁸ In January 1962, Touré insisted once more that he wished to have better relations with Senegal. By way of showing Senghor his intent, he declared himself willing to abide by the code of conduct of the UAM and Monrovia Group, notably to respect the idea of not allowing subversive elements target a foreign state. The Guinean leader admitted that after launching his own investigation, there were members of the PAI operating in his country and vowed they would be stopped from spreading seditious propaganda and doing harm to Senegal. Radio propaganda against Senegal was also reported to have ceased and favourable news programs now proclaimed Senegal a sister state.⁵⁷⁹ A few months later Senghor wrote Touré, thanking him for his gesture and letting him

⁵⁷⁵ W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966*, 199.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid, 202. W. Scott Thompson found that in the spring of 1961 Ghana still had to give Guinea 6 million Pounds to make due on its promise.

⁵⁷⁷ "Procès Verbal de la Réunion de la Commission Mixte Prévue par l'Article 8 de l'Accord de Commerce Sénégal-Guinéen." VP 155, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵⁷⁸ "Monsieur l'Ambassadeur de la République Soeur du Sénégal." VP 155, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵⁷⁹ "N. 0063/305. Objet: Entretien Ambassadeur Alioune Cissé – Président Sékou Touré. Conakry, le 20 janvier 1962." Folder VP 153, and "N. 0567. Conakry, le 11 aout 1962. L'Ambassadeur à Son Excellence Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères de la République du Sénégal, Dakar." Folder VP 151, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

know he would reciprocate by expelling a group of Guinean students who were doing the same in Dakar. Furthermore, Senghor stated his own desire to normalise relations, but declared there was still one outstanding issue to tackle. The two states remained at odds over the delineation of their border. Senghor suggested appointing a commission of Senegalese and Guinean experts to settle the matter, to prevent the issue from becoming an obstacle. He concluded the letter by wishing Touré well and calling him ‘my dear good friend.’⁵⁸⁰ In the case of the normalisation of their relations, both Senegal and Guinea came out winners. For Senghor, he was satisfied with the knowledge that his southern neighbour moved away from the Casablanca Group by expressing interest in abiding by the core principle of the UAM and Monrovia powers by surrendering the right to interfere in the affairs of others. As for the Guinean leader, cozying up to the UAM’s leading state gave him not just the hope that he was a little closer to sharing in its economic success, but also a means of building up his prestige in African affairs and opening a door to a new role of mediator. Touré had become disgruntled with the way the Casablanca Group and the radical states handled their so-called ‘cooperation’ compared to the success of the cooperation between the members of the UAM and Monrovia Groups.

In April 1962, Nkrumah was deeply alarmed by the negotiations between UAM members and the EEC, and the United Kingdom’s possible entry into the common market. Not only did his propaganda machine begin to militate against the idea, but he quickly backed the idea, floated by the Casablanca Group’s economic committee, of an African common market, whereby states joining in would see a 25% drop in customs duties every year until free trade existed. Yet the idea was ill-researched and overly optimistic.⁵⁸¹ Its greatest shortfall was that it was designed to attract the six members of the Casablanca Group in the face of a much more advanced agreement that was already in place with the Twelve of the UAM. When he approached Keita for support of the idea, Keita reportedly shut down the Ghanaian delegation’s proposal and cynically wondered aloud what sort of products Nkrumah planned to peddle in it. According to W. Scott Thompson, Nkrumah had overlooked an obvious fact. Keita, who had participated in negotiations with the EEC since 1960 and secured an agreement, had based his country’s planned economy around it.⁵⁸² It is also quite telling that the Senegalese, despite the problems between the two, and not

⁵⁸⁰ “N. 386/PR/SP. Dakar, le 14 mars 1962.” VP 155, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid, 216-7.

⁵⁸² Ibid, 217.

Nkrumah, understood that Mali faced difficult economic circumstances. A report from the Senegalese foreign ministry a few months later stated that capital flight was taking place in the country because of Keita's devaluation of its currency since taking Mali out of the Franc Zone.⁵⁸³ Nkrumah should have known that Keita was left no option but to pin his hopes on the EEC. Instead of confronting the fact that his idea was too little, too late, Nkrumah decried Keita for his betrayal by selling himself out to de Gaulle and instructed his diplomatic staff he could never work with him again.⁵⁸⁴ As for Nkrumah's project of the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union, the Ghanaian leader could not hope to keep Keita to his side because he simply never believed in the project. According to the Ghanaian cabinet records, Keita never sent a permanent representative to sit on Ghana's cabinet meetings as Touré had done.⁵⁸⁵ Whilst Keita was very interested to take Nkrumah's money when the Mali Federation fell apart and Mali came out of the Franc Zone, when it came time to showing interest in building a union by attending Ghana's cabinet meetings, Keita showed none. Mali therefore regarded its relationship with Ghana as a transactional one as Keita never showed any real interest in Nkrumah's ideological convictions.

There was another important reason for Mali's growing distance from the Casablanca group. In the spring of 1962 the entire reason why Keita joined in the first place – to find allies to oppose French policy in Africa – was largely rendered moot, as de Gaulle and the GPRA signed the Evian Accords and began the process of restoring peace in Algeria, paving the way for Algerian independence. After the Mali Federation imploded and Keita blamed the French, he could rely on scoring points domestically by opposing France's policy on many fronts – on Algeria by supporting the GPRA, on its nuclear testing in Algeria, and on its support of Mauritania with whom Mali held territorial claims. France's dramatic change in policy in Algeria undermined this policy, and a small but important Malian foreign policy change came out as a result. Keita met with Ould Daddah to discuss the former's land claims and came to terms. Soon after the meeting, Mali stopped its radio propaganda campaign against Mauritania, showing that Keita had dropped his claims. This had the effect of sending a strong signal to the UAM and

⁵⁸³ "N. 0567. Conakry, le 11 aout 1962. L'Ambassadeur à Son Excellence Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères de la République du Sénégal, Dakar." VP 151, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid, 217.

⁵⁸⁵ Unlike Guinea, there are no mentions of any Malian representative of the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union attending Nkrumah's cabinet meetings in the cabinet records held at PRAAD.

Monrovia states that his African policy was changing to accept the sovereignty of borders as they stood.⁵⁸⁶

The end of the Algerian War also sounded the end of the strong anti-French stand of two other leaders of the Casablanca Group, one more surprising than the other. In the wake of the signing of the Evian Accords, both Sékou Touré and Gamal Abdel Nasser sent congratulatory messages to Charles de Gaulle and expressed their desire to patch up and normalise their relations. Given that France was signing a peace with the Algerians, Nasser explained that he no longer saw French foreign policy as harming Arab interests.⁵⁸⁷ There was another important factor behind Nasser's decision, however, which became apparent to the French Chargé d'Affaires in Cairo tasked with normalising their relations. Nasser had noted France's economic policies with developing states in Africa and hoped that he too could negotiate some sort of economic aid from France.⁵⁸⁸ Given that Guinea had watched as the other ex-AOF states negotiated with the EEC, before normalising its relations to Senegal by signing a trade agreement, it is therefore plausible that Touré hoped to gain access to the EEC through a return to good relations with France. The end of the Algerian conflict therefore caused a remarkable turnaround in the foreign policy orientations of Guinea, Mali, and Egypt, which no longer backed the common front against France decided at Casablanca in January 1961. The end of the Algerian War therefore unpicked one of the important threads tying the Casablanca Group together, severely questioning if there was any purpose left in the group.

The Unravelling of the Casablanca Group

The Casablanca Group was created by five African states and the Algerian government in exile with the purpose of creating African unity by signing a charter harmonising their political, economic, social, and cultural policies. In reality – and in contradistinction to the Brazzaville Group – every member of Casablanca joined the charter for rather immediate and different

⁵⁸⁶ The Senegalese foreign ministry interpreted Keita's new stand on Mauritania would lead him to take on a reorientation of his foreign policy to coincide with the UAM's. See, "N. 0567. Conakry, le 11 aout 1962. L'Ambassadeur à Son Excellence Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères de la République du Sénégal, Dakar." VP 151, Fonds de la Vice-Présidence et Présidence du Conseil, National Archives of Senegal.

⁵⁸⁷ "Note du Service du Levant: Éventuelle Reprise des Relations avec le Monde Arabe, 2 avril 1962," and "Note de la Direction des Affaires Africaines et Malgaches: Normalisation des rapports avec la Guinée, Paris, 2 mai 1962," both notes reprinted in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français: 1962, Tome I, (1er janvier – 30 juin)* (Paris : Imprimerie Nationale, 1998), 378, 448.

⁵⁸⁸ Henri Froment-Meurice, *Vu du Quai: Mémoires, 1945-1983* (Paris: Fayard, 1998), 261-2.

reasons such as forming a front against other African states, trying to gain recognition of territorial claims, and promote Afro-Asian issues. Thus, the Casablanca Group was held by its members more as an alliance than a true organisation with an important purpose. The Casablanca Charter, however, founded a working organisation with political organs and it did function to an extent. Its failure as an organisation was not due to the people staffing it, but rather because of its structure and its reliance on member states to act on its recommendations to bring about change in Africa. From the time signing of the Charter in January 1961 to May 1963, the member states demonstrated they cared more for their own autonomy than being bound by recommendations from the Charter's committees and they neglected their duties to the Charter. Worse for their alliance was that their foreign policy goals diverged dramatically as well as their relationship to one another and this caused the organisation to be abandoned.

Every signatory to the Casablanca Charter had attended many African conferences in the past. Some of the member states, like Ghana, really wanted this organisation to be meaningful moving forward unlike the AAPC and AAPSO conferences had been in the past. Thus, the Ghanaian delegation succeeded in convincing the group to create an operative machinery within the organisation to bring political, economic, social, cultural, and military results to the charter. At the heart of the organisation was a secretariat called the Liaison Office which was based in Bamako and staffed with officials of all member states. This office was responsible for reminding the governments of the member states of their obligations to the charter, to call member states and organise meetings to move the project of the charter forward, and to pass along reports of the progress of the charter's committees. Under the liaison office were several committees (made up of delegations of all member states) in charge of meeting once or twice a year to make resolutions to fulfill the charter's goals. These committees, rarely made up of the heads of state themselves, would deliberate and then issue resolutions to be made binding by the member states. The liaison office would then send the resolutions to each member state so they could be ratified by their parliaments.⁵⁸⁹ This was a system which had the potential to advance the principles of the charter, but ultimately success would rely on the signatories adopting the resolutions and passing them through their parliaments. Thus, a willingness to partake in the system by the member states was assumed. For the organisation to function effectively, member

⁵⁸⁹ For a good example, see "153. P.S. Report of the Liaison Office, Bamako." RG 17/2/218. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

states needed to participate and show they were truly invested in the project. This proved to be the organisation's unravelling in 1962-3.

The system built into the Casablanca Charter was often frustrating for both its staff and the governments of member states, and it did make the organisation appear shambolic. As a result, the members' respect for the institution of the charter eroded. The first meeting of the Economic Committee in Casablanca in late November 1961, for instance, held its debates only in French. The Ghanaian delegation, astounded that no effort had been made to provide an English translator, left the meeting early without any idea what was being debated. As a result, Ghana could not participate and only learned about what happened later.⁵⁹⁰ Consistent attendance was also problem for the committees of the Charter of Casablanca. In December 1961, during a meeting of the Political Committee, the Ghanaian Foreign Ministry received an urgent cable from Casablanca stating the Ghanaian delegation meant to be at the meeting was missing. The committee urged the Ghanaian Foreign Minister to quickly send someone because the committee could not deliberate without a representative from Ghana.⁵⁹¹ During the first week of August 1962, Ghana missed the third meeting of the Economic Committee entirely as it failed to send a delegation on time and gave no warning to the others. By the time the delegation arrived, the conference had been concluded for several days. This was very embarrassing to the Ghanaian Government because it irritated the host, Hassan II. Not only did he receive no news from Ghana about its tardiness, but he was also forced to delay the start of the meeting. The Ghanaian delegation reported back to Accra that it tried as best as it could to dispel the idea that Ghana no longer cared about the Casablanca Charter.⁵⁹² Ghana was not alone in not attending on time or at all. In October 1962, the Ghanaian assistant at the liaison office in Bamako reported to Accra after the start of an important Economic Committee meeting about the African Common Market that delegations from Egypt and Algeria were going to be several days late. The Moroccan Government, knowing that attendance was often a problem, assumed no delegations would arrive

⁵⁹⁰ "A Report of the Ghana Delegation to the Sub-Committee of the African Economic Committee Held in Casablanca from 19th to 22nd November 1961." RG 17/2/178. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁵⁹¹ "Priority. From Casablanca. To Foreign Affairs, Accra. Date: 11th December, 1961." RG 17/2/178. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁵⁹² "RG/214 For Osagyefo From Bossman. GHANAEMB, Rabat. 6th August, 1962," "Etapru. RG/127," "Report of the Ghana Delegation to the 3rd Meeting of the Economic Committee of the Casablanca Powers Held at Tangiers during the Period 7th – 10th August, 1962." RG 17/1/324. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

on time to the meeting. Instead of sending its delegation to the meeting, it asked the Secretary General of the Charter to postpone the meeting altogether.⁵⁹³

Inside the organisation, frustration was building. The Secretary General of the Charter and head of the Liaison Office, Thami Ouazzani, lamented the poor effectiveness of the office and blamed the governments of the member states because they were not taking the organisation seriously and did not come to its aid. Ouazzani first wrote to each government in July 1962 asking for their help and got no replies. Thus, an exasperated Ouazzani wrote to Nkrumah six months later complaining that the situation within the Casablanca Charter was still as confused as it was two years before. The liaison office, the effective HQ of the Charter, was not only still only partially built, but it was located fifteen kilometres from Bamako's city centre making quick communications difficult. He also complained that his messages to the member states often went ignored and replies, when they did come, were incredibly late making planning very difficult. The liaison office's staff, he stated, were also not numerous or competent enough to work there despite the Casablanca states agreeing to commit qualified personnel. Guinea, he claimed, still had not sent its promised assistant to the liaison office nor had it sent its military staff to help at the Joint African High Command and neither had Algeria.⁵⁹⁴ Finally, Ouazzani said that a pattern had clearly emerged regarding interest in setting dates for the Economic, Cultural, and Joint High Command committees. Hardly any of the members showed any interest in replying to requests to set dates.⁵⁹⁵ Other reports from the liaison office show complaints that whilst they sent the recommendations, resolutions, and draft treaties of the Economic Committee to member states for acceptance and ratification, many states still had not yet done so.⁵⁹⁶

This led to its receding credibility in the eyes of some members like Egypt, Guinea, and Algeria who refused to pay their yearly dues to the organisation for 1963.⁵⁹⁷ Algerian and Egyptian liaison staff began to absent themselves from work often in the winter of 1963 because they saw no point on showing up, which led to their governments recalling them home in April.

⁵⁹³ "From Kati, Repeated to Africsec. 16th October, 1962." RG 17/1/324. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁵⁹⁴ "Organisation Africaine des États Membres de la Charte de Casablanca. Le Secrétariat. Bamako, le 7 janvier 1963." RG 17/2/218. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁶ "153. P.S. Report of the Liaison Office, Bamako." RG 17/2/218. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD. The document does not refer to specific states.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

The Liaison Office suffered by their frequent absences because it influenced junior staff members to do the same.⁵⁹⁸ Ouazzani, too exasperated to keep going and knowing there was no point in saving a doomed organisation, gave up a week later and returned to Morocco to run as a member of the House of Representatives. Emblematic of the erratic nature of the Casablanca group, Ouazzani told no one he left for good leaving the Ghanaian Government to find out the news in a *Le Monde* article.⁵⁹⁹ By late April, with no Secretary General and funds running out, the Ghanaian liaison assistant wrote to Modibo Keita and made an urgent appeal for funds to keep the office running. The Malian leader refused which effectively snuffing out the organs of the organisation.⁶⁰⁰

The committees of the Casablanca Charter would meet, deliberate, and send their recommendations, resolutions, and proposed treaties for adoption to the governments of member states to move the project of the Casablanca Charter ahead. There is evidence there was great reluctance by the governments to blindly accept their recommendations and ratify whatever they sent which can account for why the members did not ratify treaties in defiance to the charter and its aims of forging unity. In January 1962, the Ghanaian Minister of Finance and Trade received a set of recommendations from the Economic Committee of the charter asking him to gradually remove Ghana's trade barriers and tariffs over the next five years with Casablanca states. Clearly dismayed that he had not been consulted, the minister cautioned Nkrumah's assistants that these measures would have severe repercussions on the state's revenue. He instead urged the government not go ahead without reflection and had to "take an unrushed decision in the light of all the facts."⁶⁰¹ Not everything that was decided by the committees of the charter was deemed advisable by the governments of member states and it therefore caused friction between them.

Some member states of the Casablanca Charter felt like they could pick and choose which agreements they were bound to which reduced the charter's legitimacy. Furthermore, it also showed that for some members, the Casablanca Charter was more of a convenient alliance

⁵⁹⁸ "CO/AP/10-5. Short Report on the Latest Developments in the Liaison Office. 12th March, 1963," and "Telegram. BC/40. GHANAOFFICEBAMAKO. 6th April 1963." RG 17/2/218. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁵⁹⁹ "CO/AF/10-5. 14th April, 1963." RG 17/2/218. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁰⁰ "Copy. Translation. Liaison Office, 27th April, 1963," "Republic of Mali. The President, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Political Division. 30th April, 1963." RG 17/2/218. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁰¹ "Ref. No. ES.51. African States of the Casablanca Charter: Removal of Customs Barriers. 13 March, 1962." RG 17/2/178. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

rather than a set of ideals to pursue. Guinea, for instance, chose to ignore their military commitments agreed in the charter. All member states were required to provide trained military officers to help design, build, and operate an African High Command based in Bamako. Guinea, for instance, defied the agreements of the charter by not providing any military staff for the African High Command.⁶⁰² Algeria, on the other hand, was shockingly forthright from the beginning. The Algerian representative declared during the first Economic Committee meeting in 1961 that whatever resolutions the committee agreed to would not be held as binding by the future Algerian state. Without raising the significant problem in his statement, the representative quickly told the other delegates that this did not mean that Algeria's adherence to the principles of the Casablanca Charter was in question.⁶⁰³

The members' lack of seriousness shown to the Casablanca Charter was also shared by some important states outside of it, and this helped to prevent its recognition as an effective organisation. In July 1962, the members of the charter finally combined and supported the idea by signing a treaty in Cairo creating an African Common Market to rival the UAM's agreement with the EEC.⁶⁰⁴ For this treaty to work and enable trade with countries outside of the common market, it had to gain the treaty's recognition from the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in Geneva. GATT members put together a working party in November to examine the treaty and allowed the Ghanaian Minister of Finance and Trade and GATT's Egyptian delegate to give an expose. The Egyptian delegate tried to sell the idea by appealing to GATT's position on less developed countries which "should strive to attain and preserve liberal access to one another's [sic] markets."⁶⁰⁵ After all, the Egyptian delegate had a good point as states of the charter were merely trying to rearrange trade links away from Europe and towards each other. The Egyptian continued his argument but raised serious doubts in the working party on whether the proposed common market was viable or even needed at all. He stated the incredibly poor figures of Egypt's trade with other Casablanca states: "Exports from [Egypt] to these countries were 0.66% in 1959 and 0.76% in 1960 against imports of 0.11% in 1959 and 0.17% in 1961."

⁶⁰² "Organisation Africaine des États Membres de la Charte de Casablanca. Le Secrétariat. Bamako, le 7 janvier 1963." RG 17/2/218. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁰³ "Meeting of Commission of Experts of the African Economic Committee Held at Casablanca from 19th to 22nd December, 1961." RG 17/2/178. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁰⁴ "Report on the GATT Consultations Carried Out with Ghana on the Treaty Establishing the African Common Market," 5-6. RG 17/2/149. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 1-2.

The Egyptian admitted that his state had tried “to expand and diversify trade among African countries, [but] the progress made had so far been little.” Further sowing doubt, he told the working party that “the commodities featuring in African inter-territorial trade had been few, limited in variety and in many cases insignificant.” By any metric, none of these figures or statements were reassuring as Egypt had been clamoring and pretending to strive for more inter-African economic cooperation since December 1957.

The working party then allowed GATT representatives to raise questions or issues. The Ghanaian delegate then faced resistance to the idea because they mainly came from the two colonial powers with wide trade interests in Africa – Great Britain and France. The British delegate then unpicked the treaty and highlighted the many “defects in the drafting of the treaty.”⁶⁰⁶ One of the first points of contention in the treaty, he argued, was the idea that any member of this proposed free trade area could form a “bilateral arrangement with a third party outside” because it was “something both foreign to and inconsistent with the institution and basic principle of a Free Trade Area.”⁶⁰⁷ He also raised a concern with the item in the treaty whereby “two or more member States can conclude provisional bilateral agreements” within the free trade area. He wondered how this could effectively work given that bilateral agreements were between two countries, not more. The delegate, in similar fashion to a schoolteacher, noted sternly that “this aspect of the draft treaty should be gone into more carefully.”⁶⁰⁸ The most contentious point from the point of view of GATT, he argued, was that the treaty used the term “priority” in the context of imports from third parties. He and the American delegate thought this could effectively mean the same as ‘discrimination’ which was in violation with GATT principles.⁶⁰⁹

Finally, the British delegate noted the incredible inconsistencies with the dates written in several places for when the treaty would come into force. The Ghanaian delegate had to conceded that the dates written down were indeed not accurate as the treaty had not yet become ratified by its members. The Ghanaian delegate added that a new and postponed deadline of 1 January 1963 had since been submitted to each member state for the treaty’s ratification.⁶¹⁰ After demonstrating that the treaty in front of them was very shoddy work, the British delegate then

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid, 3.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid, 5.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid, 5-6.

allowed the floor to his French counterpart. Unlike the British delegate, the Frenchman was frank and immediately dismissive. He stated bluntly that since the treaty was formulated when the foreign relations of Algeria were still France's responsibility, France held "the right to challenge the international validity and legality of the Treaty."⁶¹¹ The GATT working party then closed the meeting and allowed its members to one more month to submit further issues or questions and that it would then host another clarifying meeting on the treaty in early 1963. The Ghanaian and Egyptian delegates hardly presented the Casablanca Charter in a good light by presenting their rough draft of a treaty to GATT members who did not approve it. They also found out that the British and French delegates, given their negative attitude to the treaty, presented a formidable obstacle to the creation of an African Common Market to rival their trade links in Africa. Despite Ghana's assurances that the Casablanca group of states would seek another meeting to approve the treaty, it never came to be as the group disintegrated in the winter of 1963.

A New Arab Rivalry Unravels the Alliance of the Casablanca Charter

In December 1962 and with the Addis Ababa Summit looming, the heads of state of the Casablanca Charter tentatively agreed to hold a conference together – their first in nearly two years – in the first week of January to discuss the African situation.⁶¹² Nasser agreed with the idea and explained its purpose should be to corral more "team spirit" before Addis Ababa and ensure "that their positions will be consistent with the principles and aims of the Charter."⁶¹³ Nkrumah also sent his wishes to host another conference for the same reasons.⁶¹⁴ Both leaders, in other words, wanted to keep tabs on the alliance and possibly firm it up before heading to Ethiopia in May. This conference, however, never took place. A string of cancellations from leaders forced it to be rescheduled many times and finally abandoned mere weeks before the African Summit at Addis Ababa. This failed last ditch attempt to bring the group together effectively signalled the end of the Casablanca Charter and their alliance. The individual and

⁶¹¹ Ibid, 8.

⁶¹² "Casablanca Heads of State Meeting – Marakesh, 8th March, 1963." RG 17/1/328. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶¹³ "Embassy of the United Arab Republic. Accra, 25th Jan. 1963." RG 17/1/328. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶¹⁴ "Accra, 29th January, 1963. My Dear Brother and President." RG 17/1/328. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

differing interests that brought the group together in January 1961 not only diverged a year later, but some Casablanca states also saw them turn on each other.

Guinea and Mali had grown more interested in re-joining their ex-AOF states for pressing economic reasons and became less interested in opposing France's sphere of influence in Africa. The situation in the Arab world in early 1963 – both in the Maghreb and beyond – meant that the relations between Morocco, Algeria, and Egypt changed dramatically because their focus was drawn away from African to Arab affairs. This unfortunately left Ghana as the lone state interested in keeping the alliance alive. The date of conference was pushed back twice before being postponed altogether with leaders giving flimsy reasons to one another for not being able to attend. Hassan II wrote to the charter members that he could not host the meeting in March as the others wanted because he was first receiving the Italian President before travelling to the United States and “casually” suggested for mid-May instead. In May Nasser claimed he could not attend because he was already travelling to Yugoslavia and Algeria.⁶¹⁵ Finally that same month Ben Bella wrote a very disappointed Nkrumah that there was no point in combining before the African Summit.⁶¹⁶ In the first four months of 1963, Nkrumah watched as the other leaders began to use flimsy excuses not to come together as a group. As he found out that winter, these excuses hid even more significant issues that split the alliance apart.

In January Nasser did suggest that the leaders of the Casablanca Charter should meet but informed the others that he would send an envoy in his stead. Nasser explained that the situation in the Yemen Arab Republic was forcing him to stay in Egypt. He needed to devote more attention to this matter because of the many colonial intrigues undermining the Yemeni Revolution.⁶¹⁷ By stating that he would not personally attend, Nasser was unfortunately signalling to the other charter members that he now considered African affairs a secondary priority. As weeks passed, the Ghanaian Government learned of another reason why Nasser did not want to attend himself. There were new tensions between Morocco and Egypt, and since the conference was due to be held in Marrakesh, Nasser was reluctant to go. As the Ghanaian

⁶¹⁵ “RG/78. For Osagyefo The President. From Bossman. 7th May 1963.” RG 17/1/328. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶¹⁶ “GHANAEMB, Rabat. 29th April, 1963. Secret. For Osagyefo from Bossman,” and “GHANAEMB, Rabat. Afrisec. 3rd May, 1963.” RG 17/1/328. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶¹⁷ “Accra, 29th January, 1963. My Dear Brother and President.” RG 17/1/328. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

ambassador to Morocco told Nkrumah, “under no circumstances will President Nasser personally visit Morocco – at least not in the foreseeable future.” Besieged politically by Arab nationalists, Hassan II was forced to hold a plebiscite on constitutional change in the country and Morocco adopted new constitution skewed towards the royalists. Nasser was angry with this change and considered it a “national defeat” for his country and the Arab Nationalist cause. Nasser held Hassan II responsible for this change and got himself ready to retaliate by dismissing Morocco’s claims and recognising Mauritania as an independent state.⁶¹⁸

When the meeting was postponed to March, Nasser refused to go once more on grounds that Morocco had snubbed him for not recognising the Yemen Arab Republic.⁶¹⁹ Nasser was deeply invested in the Yemeni Civil War and with many Egyptian troops on the ground, it had become his top foreign policy issue. Since it was a proxy war between Nasser and King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, Nasser believed the royalist regimes in Middle East were working together to undermine him. Nkrumah knew of this spat and that Algeria’s Ben Bella was also actively supporting Nasser in his rivalries with Maghrebi leaders. His intelligence service found out that Algerian and Egyptian agents were on the ground in Morocco and Tunisia hatching plots to assassinate the King and Bourguiba.⁶²⁰ Ben Bella also refused to travel to Morocco because the presence of other Arab leaders in Marrakesh would bolster the popularity of their King as an important Arab figure before important Moroccan elections in May.⁶²¹ The new rivalry between the Arab nationalist leaders and the Moroccan monarch effectively collapsed the alliance underpinning the Casablanca Charter.

⁶¹⁸ “C/19/6637. 19th January, 1963. Casablanca Heads of State Meeting – Marakesh, 8th March, 1963.” RG 17/1/328. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶¹⁹ “Casablanca Heads of State Meeting – Marakesh, 8th March, 1963.” RG 17/1/328. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶²⁰ “Bureau of African Affairs. 29th March, 1963. Aide Memoire. Secret.” RG 17/1/336. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶²¹ “RG/78. For Osagyefo The President. From Bossman. 7th May 1963.” RG 17/1/336. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

Chapter VII: The Creation of the Organisation for African Unity

The main factor explaining the coming together of all African groups – UAM, Monrovia, and Casablanca – to a summit at Addis Ababa in May 1963 was to debate the African regional order. Five years after the first African conference of independent states in Accra, a firm definition of what exactly African unity consisted of had yet been agreed to. Sustained propaganda campaigns, land claims on other African states, and the entrenched divisions between African states all contributed to the lingering feeling of unease in inter-African relations. The assassination of Sylvanus Olympio, Togo's President, in January 1963 was the final straw. Hugely significant, it convinced many African leaders that the state of affairs on the continent had gone too far and that they should all finally come together to set rules on the conduct between African states. Since Olympio was assassinated whilst tensions with Ghana were at their peak, it was only natural that the African leaders suspected Nkrumah was behind the plot. Nkrumah may have rejoiced at seeing a new regime take power in Togo, but the assassination – whether he was behind it or not – came at a huge cost. From January to the summit at Addis Ababa, Nkrumah's once significant influence on other leaders reached rock bottom and his stature and ideas no longer had any effect. As a result, opposition to Nkrumah grew larger as former allies changed sides, and he lost the power to affect any change in African affairs.

The Final Straw: The Assassination of Sylvanus Olympio

The acrimonious Ghanaian-Togolese relations were reaching their peak in the latter half of 1962. In August 1962 Nkrumah headed to the north of his country to meet the President of Upper-Volta for political talks. On his way back after the meeting, through the village of Kulungugu, Nkrumah's motorcade was attacked by unknown assailants with hand grenades. Nkrumah survived the assassination attempt but was very shaken by the event. The Ghanaian leader, who had been warned by his intelligence service of impending attacks by Togolese agents for years, decided that Sylvanus Olympio was certainly behind it.⁶²² Nkrumah sent an immediate message of protest to Olympio about the failed assassination attempt and Guinea jumped in in the weeks after the assassination attempt to try to defuse the situation. Touré asked Olympio if he

⁶²² "Top Secret. Personal. Intelligence Appreciation for the Month of February, 1960." RG 17/1/89. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

could visit Accra to speak with Nkrumah and reciprocate Nkrumah's visit to Togo in 1960. Olympio noted that the situation between the two was so grave that he did not feel safe travelling to Accra; besides, he simply did not see what could be achieved with a one-on-one meeting. Olympio also gave proof that Nkrumah did not want to come to terms with him as both received Touré's invitation of mediation, and only he had replied.⁶²³

Accusations and warnings by Nkrumah continued to mount on Togo in the following weeks after a spate of explosions in Accra.⁶²⁴ Nkrumah accused Togo of harbouring and plotting with important members of Ghana's exiled opposition (including K.A. Busia). "The Government of Ghana has positive proof that the Ghanaian citizens referred to above have been organising acts of terrorism to take place in Ghana and have in fact been responsible for the four explosions which took place recently in Accra." Nkrumah charged Olympio with facilitating the smuggling of explosives into Ghana for use against his government and demanded that Togo send these conspirators back to Ghana. As far as he saw it, political refugees had the right to find asylum in other states only if they did not use their adoptive country as a base for attacks on others. In a final warning, Nkrumah reminded Togo that Ghana had "the right to institute measures which it considers appropriate to the safety and security of the State of the Republic of Ghana."⁶²⁵ Olympio replied to Nkrumah in December that the idea he had been behind the assassination attempt in Kulungugu was false, as were the claims that a campaign of "terrorism and subversion" was being hatched in Togo. Olympio then tried to reassure the Ghanaian President that the political exiles in Togo were not engaging in politics. Olympio ended the note by warning Nkrumah that he should not contemplate violating Togo's "territorial integrity and independence" on the claim of acting in Ghana's defence.⁶²⁶

Mere weeks after Olympio's reply to Nkrumah, during the night of 13 January, fifty armed men made their way to the Togolese leader's house. They arrested him in front of his wife, drank his liquor, and loaded him into a car. Two men in suits approached Mrs. Olympio

⁶²³ "Office du Ghana. Conakry, le 8th October, 1962. Report No. 30 Extraordinary." RG 17/2/219. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶²⁴ "Note from the Government of Togoland to the Government of Ghana." RG 17/1/49D. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶²⁵ "Note to the Government of the Republic of Togo." RG 17/2/54. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶²⁶ "Note from the Government of Togoland to the Government of Ghana." RG 17/1/49D. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

reassuring her that if her husband agreed to their demands he would be released and climbed aboard. After the car left the compound and turned a corner, she heard four shots and found her husband dead on the side of a street.⁶²⁷ While it is still unknown who plotted the Togolese President's demise, many African leaders had reason to suspect Ghana was behind it because his death coincided with the series of public spats with Nkrumah which began in the summer of 1962. There were already signs that the ongoing Ghana-Togo feud was starting to become a major issue for inter-African affairs to those who were closest to Nkrumah who urged him to stop. His former closest allies, Sékou Touré and Modibo Keita, approached Nkrumah discreetly and explained their worries about his dreadful conduct towards Togo. They tried to convince him to stop his quarrels with Olympio because they were undermining what he wanted to erect in Africa: "any dispute, however trivial, is exploited out of all proportion by the enemies of African unity."⁶²⁸ Having already agreed to work with Haile Selassie to try to bring rival African groups together to resolve their differences, Touré was given the reason to double his efforts to do so after Olympio's assassination. For other African leaders, however, Olympio's assassination was the last straw and proof that inter-African relations had gotten out of control. The Monrovia Group's 19 leaders met in Lagos for an emergency conference to discuss Olympio's death and to unanimously condemn the use of "political assassination as a means of overthrowing the government and rising to power as a means of settling political conflicts" mentioning specifically that they saw Olympio's murder as such an act.⁶²⁹ Olympio's death, whether he had been involved in it or not, threw a wrench in Nkrumah's plans to secure his version of African unity.

The Road to Unity and the Addis Ababa Summit

In the two months leading to the African Summit in Addis Ababa in late May 1963, Nkrumah found himself increasingly isolated and outmaneuvered in African affairs. Whilst his goal to unite Africa under one government remained the same, he got no nearer to achieving it. Ghana was still dragged in the shadow of Olympio's murder and his former Casablanca allies lost interest. In the months of March and April there were signs that Nkrumah was growing very

⁶²⁷ "Annex H: The Assassination of President Sylvanus Olympio, by Gil Olympio," in Albert Teveodjre, *Pan-Africanism in Action: An Account of the UAM*, 85-6.

⁶²⁸ "Conakry 17th July, 1962. Dear Brother." RG 17/2/142. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶²⁹ "Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States. Verbatim Record Preparatory Conference of Foreign Ministers. 15 May to 25 May 1963. 2nd Meeting," 3. RG 17/2/437. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

anxious about his upcoming chances of convincing the majority of African states of his goal. In March, Nkrumah ordered the Bureau of African Affairs (BAA) to gather intelligence and report on the views of other African states. AK Barden, the head of the BAA, delivered a worrying report. Barden wrote that Nkrumah's former ally, Sekou Touré, was trying to sink Ghana's hopes of creating an African political union by trying marshal more allies to side with the Monrovia Group. Touré sent an emissary to speak with Julius Nyerere about the recent murder of Olympio. Nyerere, a dear friend of Olympio during their studies in London, was told by the Guinean envoy that Ghana masterminded his assassination.⁶³⁰ Barden reported that Nasser also sent emissaries to speak with Nyerere about the prospects of African unity, but despite this, Nasser's attention was devoted not to Africa, but to the Arab world. Nasser, Barden argued, merely pandered to African unity to African leaders to keep a connection to the continent as his real efforts were to forge Arab unity.⁶³¹ Barden also hinted that the Arab states were beginning to be more interested in Arab affairs. Both Nasser and Ben Bella, he claimed, had agents working in Morocco and Tunisia trying to assassinate their leaders. Hassan II, he reported, was more interested in establishing a strong relationship with the Americans to deter other Arab leaders from mounting a coup.⁶³² Despite some significant domestic support in Nigeria for Nkrumah's idea of forming a union, its government was actively trying to convince other African states against this idea, notably those of the Casablanca group like Guinea, Mali, and new African states to inter-African relations like Tanganyika.⁶³³

In March and April Nkrumah attempted to reach out to other leaders, friend and foe alike, but got nowhere. At the end of March Nkrumah wrote to Houphouët-Boigny and floated the idea of a strong political union in Africa. Since Nkrumah never heard back from Houphouët-Boigny, he asked his ambassador in Abidjan to find out what the Ivorian leader thought. Nkrumah was informed to expect a negative answer because Houphouët-Boigny preferred the idea of a "loose alliance of independent African states." If this were to materialise, he could then climb in importance in African affairs by using his status as the closest African ally to Charles de

⁶³⁰ "Bureau of African Affairs. 29th March, 1963. Aide Memoire. Secret." RG 17/1/336. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶³¹ Ibid, 1-2.

⁶³² Ibid, 2.

⁶³³ Ibid, 4.

Gaulle.⁶³⁴ A month later, Nkrumah wrote a respectful and tactful reminder to his “dear Friend and Brother” Gamal Abdel Nasser to not lose sight of the goal of African unity. Nkrumah noted, much to his chagrin, that for the last few months that Nasser was reviving the idea of Arab unity once more and putting more and more focus on the Middle East.⁶³⁵ By the end of April, Nkrumah was running out of time to convince anyone of his idea of continental union and he turned to a last ditch attempt.

Every head of state from independent African states were sent an invitation for the Addis Ababa Summit in the fourth week of May 1963, and all agreed to send their foreign ministers to a preparatory conference on the 13th. The foreign ministers’ duties were to create less work for the heads of state by coming to an agreement on an agenda for the summit as well as propose a draft charter to create a new African organisation to bridge the divide between African groupings. Nkrumah tasked his foreign minister, Kojo Botsio, to formulate a plan to convince the other foreign ministers of “the necessity of having one Continental Government.”⁶³⁶ Botsio understood he had a steep hill to climb, and along with his draft agenda for the summit he brought a very large delegation as an advisory committee to Addis Ababa to help him sell the idea. Included were senior Ghanaian figures with experience with African diplomacy like Alex Quaison-Sackey (Ghana’s representative at the UN), Michael Dei-Anang and K.B. Asante from the Foreign Ministry, the financier and pan-African activist T. Ras Makonnen, the ex-resident minister to Guinea and CPP official Nathaniel Welbeck, as well as a host of personal secretaries.⁶³⁷ Meeting together in the Ghanaian embassy before the start of the conference, they decided to a series of “intensive lobbying” efforts on African diplomats present and convince them to back Ghana’s draft agenda because it contained the wording and the idea “of [a] Union of African States.” The Ghanaian delegation was then split up into sections and assigned specific foreign ministers to lobby.⁶³⁸

⁶³⁴ “A/13/501. Embassy of the Republic of Ghana, Abidjan, Ivory Coast. 26th March, 1963.” RG 17/1/336. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶³⁵ “My dear Friend and Brother, Accra, 24th April, 1963.” RG 17/1/336. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶³⁶ Untitled report of Foreign Ministers’ Preparatory Conference and the Addis Ababa Summit written by the Foreign Ministry, 2. RG 17-2-1047. The first page of this report, which probably contained the title of the document, was missing.

⁶³⁷ “Appendix B.” RG 17-2-1047. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶³⁸ Ibid.

On the 13th, the preparatory conference opened and Botsio pounced on the opportunity to give Ghana's case for a unitary continental government and the adoption of Ghana's proposed agenda for the summit. Botsio needed to press his case because the day prior, the Ethiopian Government submitted a draft agenda based on the views of all African blocs to serve as reference point for the talks. This draft agenda, however, was the antithesis of Ghana's because it did not bring up for discussion the idea of continental government. Instead, the Ethiopian Government suggested they should discuss the "establishment of [an] Organization of African States" of which the goal would be to promote "cooperation in agreed areas of African endeavour."⁶³⁹ At the start of proceedings, Botsio launched into Nkrumah's argumentation to see if the idea could take hold. He argued that creating a continental government instead of a loose organisation of cooperation was the only answer to combat the entrenched forces of neo-colonialism dividing the continent. Not only would it marshal all of Africa's resources to build its formidable potential strength but it was the only way for Africa to regain its dignity in the postcolonial period.⁶⁴⁰ Botsio then submitted Ghana's proposal for the summit's agenda in which the main point of discussion was the "Creation of a Political Union of African States."⁶⁴¹ Political unification and cooperation as independent states were very different things, and Ghana's idea was ignored by the other foreign ministers who were on side with Ethiopia's suggestion. Tunisia, Sudan, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Congo-Léopoldville, and worse for Ghana, its former allies, Mali and Egypt submitted agenda proposals which wanted to discuss establishing an organisation of cooperation instead of unification.⁶⁴²

The Ghanaian delegation was boxed into a corner and Botsio was furious at not having allies backing him up during the conference. This was compounded when the issue of Togo's recent regime change came up. Botsio felt short changed because he expected at least one to

⁶³⁹ "Confidential Agenda/Conf/1 12 May 1963. Ethiopia Agenda Proposal for the Foreign Ministers Conference," in "Summit Conference of Independent African States. Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States, Volume 1, Section 1, Addis Ababa, May 1963." RG 17/2/550. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁴⁰ "Appendix A." RG 17/2/1047. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁴¹ 'No. C,4/4(S)/153 Secret. 15 May 1963,' in "Summit Conference of Independent African States. Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States, Volume 1, Section 1, Addis Ababa, May 1963." RG 17/2/550. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁴² See, 'Agenda/Conf/13 16 May 1963,' 'Agenda/Conf/1/Amd. 1 15 May 1963,' "Agenda/Conf/10/15 May 1963," "Agenda/Conf/4/15 May 1963," 'Agenda/Conf/6/15 May 1963,' "Agenda/Conf/1/Amd. 2 15 May 1963," 'Agenda/Conf/1/Amd. 3 15 May 1963,' and "Agenda/Conf/12 15 May 1963," in in "Summit Conference of Independent African States. Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States, Volume 1, Section 1, Addis Ababa, May 1963." RG 17/2/550. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

come to his aid, the new Grunitzky regime in power in Togo, but its delegation was stopped by Ethiopian security forces from attending. The Ghanaian Foreign Minister was outraged and demanded explanations from the Ethiopian Government and strongly castigated every delegation that was behind their exclusion from the conference. Unashamed of the blatant hypocrisy, Botsio attempted to take the moral high ground. He argued that none present had the right to accept or deny another's attendance at the conference by judgement of how an African state chose to deal with its internal affairs.⁶⁴³ By being the only state to argue for Togo's attendance, Botsio further sank Ghana's cause because he made it seem even more likely that Nkrumah was behind Togo's change in government.

Insulted by Botsio's remarks, Guinea's Foreign Minister immediately spoke up in protest. An invitation was indeed sent to Togo to attend, he conceded, but it was sent to Olympio and not Grunitzky. This invitation was obviously invalidated when Olympio was assassinated in dubious circumstances and replaced by a "puppet" regime claiming to represent Togo. Just before he ceded his turn to speak, the Guinean diplomat reminded Botsio that "political assassination has been condemned by all."⁶⁴⁴ The Foreign Minister of Nigeria told the others that he could not allow Grunitzky's delegation to attend because it was tantamount to his state's recognition of the new regime. This was precisely not done by President Azikiwe because many of the states present at the conference decided at the Lagos conference after the murder that "they do not accept the principle of murder and assassination as a means of attaining power."⁶⁴⁵ The issue was finally put to bed the next day as the Foreign Minister of Egypt decided not to come to Ghana's aid. He took the floor and quickly exclaimed that enough time had been wasted discussing Togo before moving on to other business.⁶⁴⁶ Despite the presence of a Togolese delegation in Addis Ababa, they were kept from participating and potentially lending a hand to the Ghanaians.

The lobbying of the Ghanaian delegation and Botsio's efforts to convince other foreign ministers of the idea of political unity failed as they were ignored and Ethiopia's draft agenda for

⁶⁴³ "'Appendix K.'" RG 17/2/1047, and "Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States: Verbatim Record Preparatory Conference of Foreign Ministers 15 May to 25 May 1963. 2nd Meeting," 1. RG 17/2/437. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁴⁴ "Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States: Verbatim Record Preparatory Conference of Foreign Ministers 15 May to 25 May 1963. 2nd Meeting," 2.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid, 3-4.

⁶⁴⁶ "Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States: Verbatim Record, Preparatory Conference of Foreign Ministers 15 May to 25 May 1963. 3rd Meeting," 1.

the summit was made official. Despite the odds stacked against him, Nkrumah did not plan on backing down at the Addis Ababa Summit and he doubled down. To prepare his arrival at the conference, Nkrumah ordered Botsio to host a lavish party on the 19th at the Ghanaian embassy to celebrate the release of his new book making the case for political unification, *Africa Must Unite*, and invited all African foreign ministers and their staff. The evening did not draw the crowd as hoped as the foreign ministers of the Lagos Charter did not show because it was designed to promote political unity.⁶⁴⁷ Nkrumah arrived the next day and still must have had a glimpse of hope his personality could command the most attention. Upon landing, Haile Selassie, in a show of respect to the first host of an all-African conference, welcomed him personally at his aircraft. Nkrumah naturally took the opportunity to speak to the press in the Emperor's presence and declare that he had arrived "to lay the foundation for the establishment of a Union of African States."⁶⁴⁸ Nkrumah's confidence was also boosted by the fact that he was the only one driven with Selassie to the Ghion Hotel where all heads of state were staying and given the room next to his.⁶⁴⁹ Once at the hotel, Nkrumah took advantage of the close proximity to meet with his Casablanca allies Nasser, Touré, and Keita to try to convince them of the need for political unity under a "strong centralised government."⁶⁵⁰

From 23-25 May, the heads of state took turns to give their views on African unity and only Nkrumah made the case for political unity. The first to speak, Sékou Touré, argued that a charter establishing the new organisation should combine elements from the Casablanca and Lagos Charters. The second speaker, Léopold Senghor, pre-empted Nkrumah and stated that African unity with a central government under a federalised or confederative structure was totally unfeasible. Senghor's statement held good weight with everyone at the conference given the failure of the Mali Federation a few years before. The other Brazzaville leaders then followed Senghor and gave similar statements.⁶⁵¹ Nkrumah gave his impassioned address on the 25th and once again stressed that a truly independent Africa needed was a strong political union, a "Union Government of Africa" with a constitution to be drawn at a later date. A capital for the union was

⁶⁴⁷ Untitled report of Foreign Ministers' Preparatory Conference and the Addis Ababa Summit written by the Foreign Ministry, 22. RG 17-2-1047. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid, 23.

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid, 24-7.

also needed and he suggested Bangui or Léopoldville.⁶⁵² Despite the passion of his speech, the next speakers proved to Nkrumah that no one was listening. Nasser then took the podium and stated that he desired African Unity to take shape in political and economic cooperation rather than a political union. Making amends with his previous irritating tactic of bringing issues from the Middle East into African forums, Nasser vowed to stop bringing up the problem of Israel in African forums.⁶⁵³ Modibo Keita spoke after Nasser and was followed by Julius Nyerere, King Idris of Libya, and François Tombalbaye of Chad. All agreed that it was much more reasonable to build African unity through political, economic, and social cooperation.⁶⁵⁴

Whilst the heads of state deliberated on 23-24 May, the foreign ministers were tasked to provide a draft charter to establish the new African organisation. Together they wrote a charter which demonstrated their leaders truly wanted to abolish the differences between groupings and wanted to establish a set of principles for all African states. In the draft charter finally defined the contentious term of African unity as “enabl[ing] the independance [sic] of peoples and their sovereignty to be safeguarded against colonialist activities and their sequels” as well the “co-operation between nations and stability in Africa.” Its principles to adhere to were firm and clear: “a) sovereign equality of States; b) non-interference in the internal affairs of state; c) respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and of its inalienable right to an independent existence [...] e) unreserved condemnation of political assassination as a means of gaining power as well as of subversive activities on the part of neighbouring States or any other States.”⁶⁵⁵ With these statements this draft paid homage to the Monrovia powers, but it also continued with passages important to the Casablanca powers: “g) absolute dedication to the complete emancipation of the African territories which are still dependent; h) affirmation of a policy of non-alignment with regard to all blocs.”⁶⁵⁶ This draft, which was sent to all heads of state for 12 hours of perusal on the 25th, did not remotely signal that Africa was heading towards political unity as Nkrumah wanted. A very quick buffet dinner was arranged just past midnight on the 26th as the draft charter was being officially prepared, and after having eaten, every head of state entered the conference hall and took their turn to sign the charter officially founding the

⁶⁵² Ibid, 27.

⁶⁵³ Ibid, 28.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid, 29.

⁶⁵⁵ ‘Com. 1/Dra. Res. /16, 19 May 1963.’ RG 17/2/550. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid.

Organisation of African Unity in the early hours.⁶⁵⁷ The Charter of the OAU finally put many arguments of the last six years to an end.

A Definition of African Unity: the OAU Charter of 25 May 1963

The aims of the summit at Addis Ababa were to negotiate an end to the rival groupings in African affairs because inter-African relations were suffering as a result of different beliefs and goals. The summit was therefore tackling the heart of the problem of inter-African relations, notably the contested ideas of unity, the goals the independent African states should have for the continent's future, and setting some principles for the conduct of relations between African states to establish some clear ground rules. To make the groups come together as one, the states at the summit had to come up with a reasonable formula if it were to be accepted by all African states. A whole new institution ensuring the participation of all African states was therefore created with a name which clearly stated its purpose – the Organisation of Africa Unity. Underpinning the charter for the new institution was a clear and important set of beliefs they had all shared since the beginning of their independence. These included sweeping statements like the “[Dedication] to the general progress of Africa,” that “all African States should henceforth unite so that the welfare and wellbeing of their peoples can be assured,” their shared “determination to promote understanding among our peoples and cooperation among our states in response to the aspirations of our peoples for brother-hood and solidarity, in a larger unity transcending ethnic and national differences.” The most important for many also appeared in the preamble of the charter – their determination “to safeguard and consolidate the hard-won independence as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our states, and to fight against neocolonialism in all its forms.”⁶⁵⁸ The establishment of the OAU also settled a question raised in April 1958 during the IAS conference – the geopolitical limits of Africa – with the founding statement that the organisation would only include for membership “the Continental African States, Madagascar and other Islands surrounding Africa.”⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁷ Untitled report of Foreign Ministers' Preparatory Conference and the Addis Ababa Summit written by the Foreign Ministry, 30. RG 17-2-1047. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁵⁸ “OAU Charter,” 1. African Union, accessed June 2019, https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7759-file-oau_charter_1963.pdf

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid, 3.

An important matter which was settled at the founding of the OAU was the definition of ‘unity’ which the debates from 1957 to 1961 came down to two rival ideas – unity by fusing states together under one leadership or the formation of a common front between independent states. In this regard the summit fell on the side of the Monrovia Group. The OAU’s designed purpose was to “promote the unity and solidarity of the African States” and at the same time “defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence” in their quests to achieve Africa’s goals like the eradication of any form of colonialism, the search for a better quality of life for their people, and for the and the “[promotion] of international cooperation.”⁶⁶⁰ The OAU’s last stated purpose was to “coordinate and harmonize their general policies” in matters of diplomacy, politics, defence, economic cooperation (including transport and telecommunications), cultural and educational matters, and health and sciences.⁶⁶¹ Thus, the OAU’s design finally put the matter of what was meant by ‘unity’ to rest; the OAU was designed as a system of cooperation on African matters between independent African states.

With the understanding of unity established, the OAU Charter turned to the important principles required to be adopted by its members in the conduct of relations with each other as they set out to fulfil the OAU’s mandate. The first three principles fell again in favour of the Monrovia states who had been victims of violations of their sovereignty: “1. The sovereign equality of all Member States. 2. Non-interference in the internal affairs of States. 3. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and for its inalienable right to independent existence.” The Charter also provided some important principles dear to the members of the Casablanca Group – that members remain be totally devoted “to the total emancipation of the African territories which are still dependent” and that they all took “a policy of non-alignment with regard to all blocs.” One principle also recalled recent events in Togo and had to be observed in order to prevent chaos in other states – the “unreserved condemnation, in all its forms, of political assassination as well as of subversive activities on the part of neighbouring States or any other States.”⁶⁶² One principle, the OAU’s fourth, (which was consequently closely tied to Article 7) introduced an important innovation absent from all principles ever enunciated by the African groups that preceded the OAU. One of the major issues of inter-African relations

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶⁶² Ibid, 4.

was that states did not have recourse to help from larger organisations to assist them with a conflict or dispute with another African state. All African states up until that point, were left to their own devices to settle disputes which unsurprisingly led to a rise in tensions in inter-African affairs. Thus, article 7 expanded on the UAM's idea of arbitration used during the Gabon-Congo Brazzaville crisis by establishing an institution within the OAU called the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration which allowed the African states the pathway to conflict resolution by taking the problem to the OAU instead of taking it on themselves.

Another important matter was also put to rest at Addis Ababa because it was the first time since the April 1958 that all African leaders met each other in one location. One of the busiest African leaders at the conference, Mokhtar Ould Daddah, used it as an opportunity to seek out additional support for Mauritania's claim in its conflict with Morocco. Daddah met with many Arab-African leaders including the two most influential Arab leaders and former members of the Casablanca Group, Gamal Abdel Nasser and Ahmed Ben Bella, for the first time to press his case. Given the tensions between Morocco and Algeria, Ben Bella told Daddah that he could not make any public statements on the matter for fear of making matters worse between the two. However, Ben Bella told the Mauritanian leader that he was on his side of the dispute and vowed to discreetly help him.⁶⁶³ Nasser was apologetic during his meeting with Daddah, and they talked for over an hour in private. Nasser confided that he threw Egypt's support behind the late Mohammed V at an Arab League summit in August 1960 on the issue because he had only heard Morocco's side of the story since Tunisia was still boycotting the Arab League. Nasser promised Daddah to kick off a series of steps for the next year which would culminate with Mauritania's *de jure* recognition by Egypt. Nasser explained it was necessary for him to distance himself from the Arab League's decision not to recognise Mauritania.⁶⁶⁴ Gone from this charter were Nasser's own famous resolutions relating to foreign causes beyond the African continent. No mention of Palestine, Israel, or even the Bandung principles are made in the Charter of the OAU, showing that Nasser had finally come to terms with the geopolitical limits of the African continent. Nasser also used the opportunity of the gathering of every African leader and decided to put a halt on his rivalry with Bourguiba.

⁶⁶³ Mokhtar Ould Daddah, *La Mauritanie contre vents et marées*, 269.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid, 270-2.

Daddah ran into Hassan II and once again turned him down on an offer of forming a federation with Morocco and reminded him the only basis on which any talks could start was Morocco's recognition of Mauritania as a sovereign state.⁶⁶⁵ This started a spat at the summit between the two, culminating with Hassan II refusing to take part at the OAU Charter's signing ceremony. Hassan II refused to sign if the Mauritians were going to. Morocco eventually signed the charter in September 1963 only after being allowed to caveat their signature with Hassan II's disagreement of the Charter's provisions on the respect of African borders because he felt they were an artificial colonial imposition.⁶⁶⁶ Hassan thus earned a defeat at the summit because he failed to gain recognition for his claims on Mauritania, but he was not the only loser. After signing his name on the OAU Charter, a defeated Nkrumah was too proud to recognise his lowered status. Nkrumah – as a result of his own inept foreign policy – sabotaged his status as Africa's pre-eminent leader and failed to create the unity he desired. As the ink dried on the charter, he tried to spin his defeat into a victory by telling the other leaders and the press in the conference hall that this moment was merely the start of unity and that true political unity was not far.⁶⁶⁷ Nkrumah did return to Accra and refused to believe he had lost in his struggle to bring to life his vision for Africa. In the following years elaborated a constitution for an African super-state, and up to his ouster from power in February 1966 he found no willing takers among other African nations.⁶⁶⁸

Conclusion

Throughout the story of the tumultuous inter-African relations between 1957 and 1963, never did an independent African state deviate from the shared continental goal to cooperate to bring an end to colonialism in Africa. As the previous chapters show, it was not this goal that was the cause of friction in inter-African relations, but the means through which many African leaders chose to try to reach this end. The foreign policies of African states in this period were therefore of tremendous importance because they yielded the most enduring and important document in post-colonial African history, the Charter of the OAU. The emphasis given on problems relating to the effects of the foreign policies of African states during the drafting of the

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid, 269-70.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁷ Untitled report of Foreign Ministers' Preparatory Conference and the Addis Ababa Summit written by the Foreign Ministry, 31. RG 17-2-1047. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

⁶⁶⁸ For the draft constitution, see folder RG 17/2/445. Bureau of African Affairs Collection, PRAAD.

OAU charter is a testament to the difficult experience of Africa's step into the post-colonial age. Despite the wishes of the framers and signatories to give the document an international dimension, much more time was spent on framing the rules of the game to regulate inter-African relations to put an end to a period of political strife that spanned six years. Most importantly, the traumatic experience of states like Senegal, Mauritania, and Togo who witnessed foreign intervention in their states' affairs highlighted the difficult and often weak connections between the new regimes and their domestic polity. The charter acknowledged the problem of state building where tumultuous domestic politics met foreign policymaking and established an important rule to forbid states from intervening in the affairs of others. No longer would it be acceptable for states to undermine others by interfering in their affairs as they had to respect each other's sovereignty. For this reason, the document signalled the widespread acceptance on the continent that Africa was now made up of a nation-state system.

The antagonisms underpinning continental politics up to and including the signing of the OAU charter created very satisfied winners, and very bitter losers including in their ranks the protagonists to this story. The most energetic supporter and standard bearer for the goal of ridding Africa of colonialism, Kwame Nkrumah, believed that he alone possessed the foresight to build a large political unit with a centralised power structure that could ensure the liquidation of the rest of the continent. What is certainly tragic is that while he was never doubted for his powerful hatred of colonialism throughout his entire life, he never realised that he contradicted his own beliefs by engaging in similar behaviour as the colonial powers in his drive to make his dream a reality. Starting out in this story as the most charismatic leader to emerge in the hunt for the title of Africa's leading anticolonial figure, his contemporaries increasingly viewed him with contempt as he put into motion a cavaliering foreign policy. His negative attitude to Gamal Abdel Nasser's arrival in African affairs was one of pure jealousy as Nasser had simply achieved more on the world stage by virtue of reaching power and independence first. The tensions and competition that arose between the two charismatic anticolonial figures soured inter-African relations at a time when many hopeful African leaders were watching. The only lesson the watching African states could learn from this rivalry was that there were figures in African politics who simply would not share power or cooperate on equal terms in their quest to lead African anticolonial efforts. Nkrumah paid dearly for his dreadful behavior in African affairs, and documents in the Ghanaian archives and in Washington convey the clear impression that he

simply could not come to terms with how he managed to lose the faith of his polity – once so united behind him – his influence on the continent, and his prominence in anticolonial matters as quickly as he did.

The reign of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the hero of Bandung and the Suez War, began on very shaky grounds. Seizing power at a very opportune moment in Egyptian politics, he was immediately disliked in his society for crushing their democratic rights and called ‘Colonel Jimmy’ for cozying up to the hated Americans in his quest to gain financial and military aid for his state. Lucky to escape unscathed from two unsuccessful coups within his own military, Nasser understood that he needed to urgently address his lack of popularity in the military and wider public. His successful solution showed him to be one of the most astute students of statecraft in the Third World. He skillfully engineered a successful grand strategy where he satiated the needs of his state, his polity, and the most dangerous element in Egyptian politics, the military. An important facet of this grand strategy was to fashion the Egyptian state a new identity as the leading anticolonial actor on the world stage which brought him immense domestic popularity. Nasser, however, was very much a victim of his own success. In his quest to reinforce his anticolonial credentials on so many fronts he spread Egyptian influence too thin. As a result, he was left to ‘tag along’ or ‘ride on someone else’s coattails on issues where only his persona could lend a measure of influence as he did not have the resources to bring into play. Nasser, simply put, had his fingers in much too many anticolonial pies and conflict areas in which he had deeply invested the Egyptian state. The list is long and costly, with Egypt being involved – if not entangled – in the Maghreb, Sudan, Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Jordan, Palestine/Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the Non-Aligned Movement with his partner Josip Broz Tito. Choices were made on where his attention, and most importantly where he could spend his state’s resources, and Africa became less important after the formation of the Casablanca Bloc and the intensification of the conflict in Yemen. From this point onwards he realised not only that he needed to focus more on the Arab front and make his peace with the events unravelling in Africa. Besides, he certainly thought, he had done his most important work helping Algeria find independence.

Senghor, who emerges as the clear winner from this story, was the important lynchpin on which African affairs began to swing in the direction of the foundation of the OAU. In hindsight

there could not have been a poorer horse to gamble on to take the role of most important figure in African political developments. Presiding over a state poor in resources and a deeply divided polity, he luckily escaped the trap set by his unruly neighbor Modibo Keita in the last hours of the Mali Federation. An early advocate for federation as a means to end France's colonial hold on its territories in Africa, the split of the Mali Federation made him rethink how he could achieve this goal. In the wake of the split he also became the leading voice in Africa against ideas of any form of unity by readily pointing to the Mali Federation's smoking ruins. His near removal from power by Keita also helped convince any leader still on the fence about such plans and he was thus able to draw others to his side. Since the 1940s Senghor had tirelessly militated for a reformed agreement between the French territories in Africa that would see Africans respected as equals. Ever the master of the 'trial and error' method, he had failed to do so from inside France's political system, from the AOF, and from the independent Mali Federation. His new solution needed to be different and ground-breaking, and it reflected his experience leading the Senegalese state. Senegal needed to promote cooperation as equals in the African political scene whilst being more repressive at home. Not only would this prevent coup attempts and deflect any possible external meddling in one's home affairs, but a large cluster of independent African states could attract attention from Europe and hope to be treated as equals. Tragically, the popularity rose for this solution and was widely adopted by other African states and helped to build the consensus on establishing the nation-state system that reigned at the OAU summit. Senghor's new foreign policy ended up being the winning strategy and it was made much easier for it to win out as Nkrumah and Nasser made more and more enemies on the African continent. The UAM, Senghor's brainchild, also got the attention of the European powers which dealt with Senegal with a respect befitting an independent state during successful talks on economic development. Finally, after years of trying, Senghor could boast that he at last realised his domestic promises to keep Senegal close to Europe for Senegal's benefit.

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